

Important Notice:

The Western Pyrotechnics Association, Inc. also known as the WPA is a non-profit group of fireworks professionals' and their apprentices. This newsletter is a vehicle for their exchange of information in this craft and the right to publish this information is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America. Nonetheless, readers are urged to learn and obey all laws and regulations of all federal, state and local jurisdictions and of their agencies and representatives. Some information herein may contain incomplete descriptions of fireworks techniques based on the experience of its author(s) in a controlled environment with circumstances and conditions different from a reader's. Readers must form their own opinion as to the application of this information. This information is considered documentary in nature and no opinion is given as to its suitability or use. No warranties are made either expressed or implied, included but not limited to warranties of the accuracy of the information herein. The WPA is not responsible for the opinions of authors or mistakes in printing. All information is intended solely for reviewing by members of the Western Pyrotechnics Association and its associates. The WPA's entire liability and anyone else's remedy shall be a refund of the subscription price. In no event shall the WPA, or its officers or the editor, be held liable for any damages whatsoever arising out of the use or inability to use the information in this publication, even if said parties have been advised of the possibility of such damages. This publication is published by and is the sole property of the copyright owner, and is not to be sold or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of the editor and publisher. The contents of this newsletter are Copyright 2005. All Rights Reserved by the Western Pyrotechnic Association, Inc., or the author(s), if so indicated, and is re-published by permission of the copyright owner. Any previous agreement to allow anyone to re-publish any material from the WPA, Inc., Newsletter is revoked and void as of March 1, 1995. Reproduction without permission will be deemed a purchase and implied authorization by the user to accept billing and make a payment of a minimum of \$50 user's fee per instance of use. Distribution is limited to paid subscribers. Submission of written material, graphics and photographs dealing with pyrotechnics or fireworks related technologies or activities of, and information to the benefit of the members of the WPA, Inc., are gladly solicited. All submissions become the property of the Western Pyrotechnics Association, Inc., and may be edited or rejected for any reason. No payment is made for submission, and submitted materials cannot be returned.

Instruction for Authors and Advertisers

The WPA Newsletter is published three times annually by the Western Pyrotechnic Association, Inc. Articles submitted to the Newsletter may be on any topic of potential interest to WPA members. The Newsletter Staff will do their best to publish any reasonable manuscript submitted by WPA members. Electronic submissions of manuscripts are strongly preferred. If you have an article, advertisement, photo or other information you wish to submit to the Newsletter, please send the material to:

Tim O'Neil
Havasu Pyrotechnics
14 N. Lake Havasu Ave., Ste 2
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86405

Phone: (928) 412-0798
E-mail: tim@ictaz.com

From the President

I think that I've finally recovered from my week in Lake Havasu and my feet are now back firmly on the ground. What an incredible Blast! If you missed it, you missed one of the best ever. If you were there, then you know what I mean. Even the min cooperated by staying, mostly, out of the way and leaving open shooting clear and breezy. An incredible public display by Premier Pyrotechnics, some fabulous demos at Sara Park and a stunning closing show by Fireworks America added to the fun. And how about those Abergloves??? We had plenty of food and drink and we even broke our record for the amount of beer consumed during the event: 11 kegs! BBQ Bill might have been late to arrive on Sunday night, but his 550 hats and 350 beef ribs were vaporized in under 45 minutes! My hat is off to all of the staff members who, once again, showed their expertise in pulling off a super event. I am happy to report that this group is returning on mass for next year's Winterblast 15 so I'm sure that we can look forward to another great event. Personally, I can't wait.

In spite of the economy and higher fees, Winterblast was well attended and our treasury is in good shape as we roll towards Do It. Speaking of event number two, Do It by the River 5 will be held October 16-17-18, 2003. Once again we will return to the banks of the Colorado River in Laughlin, NV and the AVI will be our host hotel. The hotel is keeping their rates the same as last year and this year's fireworks vendor will be Flying Phoenix. They have an extraordinary selection of class C and B and, with the club allowing the use of its license for B sales, look for the sky to be filled with burst after burst of large shells. Yes, since things went well last year, the big guns will be back and we'll be shooting up to 12" shells again this year.

I want to remind everyone that the Board meets once a month to discuss club business and we are always happy to hear from you in this regard. If there is an item or issue that you want us to review, please send an email to wpa-board@wyco.com, or give one of us a call. We are always available to the membership and happy to discuss the club with you.

I want to remind all of you that this is my last year as your president. Two terms and 4 years is enough for me and I'm looking forward to a break. I am thrilled with the direction that the club is going, with the leadership on the Board, with the attitude of the members and with the smooth way that things are being run now. I have been blessed with your overwhelming support, and I have been touched by your calls of "4 more years", as well as those of you who personally asked me to stay. The fact is, however, that it is time for new blood to rise to the top and I would like to leave the presidency before I completely burn out! I promise to continue to help the club in any way that I can and to advise any president or board member that asks for my advice. There are some great leaders among us, and I know that one of you will make a great next president.

Kief Adler

From the Vice President

Another term as VP, what was I thinking! Just kidding. I am honored, and pleased to have been elected for a second term as your Vice President. I worked very hard for the club these past 2 years, but I enjoyed it. I realized that my efforts were appreciated, and they made the club better and stronger.

I have taken on some additional new responsibilities this term, and hope my efforts will continue to make the WPA a world-class club. I have also stepped up to be Chairman for Winterblast XV, and know it will be a success as I will have the privilege of having the experience of Russ Laurie and Fred Starr as my Co-Chairman.

There is no rest for the weary. I have worked on 3 shirable firework shows on the beach/ocean since Winterblast; San Clemente, Manhattan Beach, and Santa Barbara with several other club members, and I am slated to do about 30-40 more firework shows before Do-It. All this, plus a real full time job too? Where do I find the time?

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at Do-It, where I hope to light some fuses and make some noise with you down on the shooting lines.

Until then,

Relax, regain your strength, and see you at Do-It!!

Don Osterle

From the Secretary

I thought I should introduce myself to those who might only know me by name or face.

I have always loved fireworks. I came from a very, very, small town in Colorado. Near Fort Collins. Our family drove to the biggest town nearby every July 4th to see a show. That was a really big deal back in the 50's.

I was a computer programmer at Boeing until I retired last year. Now I have the time, desire and knowledge to keep the WPA databases current. I welcome all emails informing me about new addresses and email changes. (I think at least 1/2 of the membership changed their email addresses last year). It helps us if you would tell me any changes of address immediately to avoid your newsletters being returned to us. You would also get the event registration forms on time.

I joined WPA to just enjoy the shows but am glad I decided to get more involved. For the past 2 years, my husband, Dallas, and I have been in charge of Winterblast registration. This year I will be at the Do It by the River event for the first time. Many friendships have been formed at the events and I hope to renew these and make more in the future.

See you at Do It.

Rita Osterle

From the Publications VP

First off, I know that I am late with this publication. However, I hope that you will enjoy a little bit of change. When you initially take over a role such as this, you underestimate the work that you must do. Tie this in with operating a couple of businesses, and then being stupid enough to agree to teaching an 8th grade science class full time, either you love fireworks or are a true masochist.

I would like to thank Greg Boyd for donating equipment to allow cheap publication. Without his help I would be at a loss, not only in this endeavor, but in numerous other projects that we always find ourselves working on. In addition, it is fitting to add in my true partner in crime, Dave Glass who Havasu Pyrotechnics would not continue to function without. And I also challenge each and everyone else reading this newsletter to get involved. Not only with this organization, but with political issues that effect our business and hobby. I know if I can find time to do what I do, then everyone can pitch in a little and help keep this a safe and legal affinity.

In this issue, you should find quite a variety. In addition to the same old business of publishing our minutes and how your money was spent, we have added some issues that are of great importance to fireworks in general. We have also tapped the talent of one of our resident chemists to help us solve some common problems with some great solutions.

I hope to see more contributions from the membership in the way of materials to publish, or at least some ideas of what you would like to see. If I don't get to see you, I hope you have a happy and safe fourth, and look forward to seeing each and every one of you manifests at Do It this year.

And the first salute is on me.

Tin O'Neil

Letter From ATF

The following letter was sent in response to one that I wrote to the ATF on March first of this year, asking for clarification on the issue of background checks and our members, due to the new Safe Explosives Act requirements. I argued in my letter that the requirements for the industry should not be the same for the clubs since we were a volunteer organization and did not sell shows or fireworks. Their response follows and is some of the best news that I've heard since this Act was passed.

Kief Adler, President

May 8, 2003

This is in response to your letter dated March 1, 2003, in which you requested information about the Safe Explosives act of 2002 (the Act) and how it may affect pyrotechnic clubs.

In your letter, you state that the Western Pyrotechnic Association has a valid Federal explosives user permit and allows your members to set off display fireworks at club events. You further state that you allow your members to manufacture explosive materials under the club's permit onsite at two club events each year.

As you are probably aware, the Act was enacted on November 25, 2002. The Act, in part, requires all persons who receive explosive materials to possess a Federal explosives license or permit. The Act also, in part, requires all persons who are employees of a Federal explosives licensee or permittee and who will possess explosive materials during the course of their employment to submit identifying information to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) for the purposes of conducting a background check.

As a fireworks club that holds a valid Federal explosives users permit, you may sponsor fireworks events at which volunteer club members may possess explosive materials while assisting in supervised shoots, so long as their assistance is under the direction or control of the club. Their assistance is only lawful under the following circumstances:

The club must have lawfully received the fireworks pursuant to a valid Federal permit or license, the exception in section 845 (a) (3), or other appropriate exception;

An authorized club employee or responsible person receives and possesses the fireworks used in the show in the scope of his employment and on behalf of the club;

The volunteer member's possession is under direction or control of the authorized club employee or responsible person; and

The club has no knowledge that the volunteer member is a prohibited person.

The club may not, however, provide fireworks or other explosive materials to your volunteer members for their shooting events. If this were to occur, you may be distributing explosives in violation of Federal law and the members may be receiving explosives in violation of Federal law.

The volunteer members are not club employees or responsible persons and, as such, the club is not required to report them on an ATF F 5400.28, Employee Possessor Questionnaire. The volunteer club members are subject to the prohibited persons categories, however, and the club may not allow volunteer members who they know are prohibited persons to possess explosive materials.

The same restrictions and circumstances would apply to the manufacturing of explosive materials at a club sponsored event. Additionally, the club must maintain the manufacturing records required by 27 CFR 555.123.

We trust that the foregoing has been responsive to your inquiry. Please feel free to contact Specialist Megan Morhouse of the Public Safety Branch at 202-927-2310 if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely yours,

Carson Carroll

Chief, Arson and Explosives Programs Division

Minutes of Annual Meeting of the Western Pyrotechnic Association - Feb. 16, 2003

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm. Kief Adler, president, presided. All members of the Board of Director's were in attendance along with general membership.

Approval of 2002 annual meeting minutes. It was moved to pass the minutes of last year's general business meeting which were published in the Newsletter. Motion passed.

Winterblast 2003 compensation policy passed as determined by the WWB chairs and approved by the Board.

Change in By-Laws. Shall the V.P. of Communications be responsible for all publications such as newsletters, Do-It and Winterblast programs and anything else the board may require? Question from floor asked if this included the e-mail list. Answer - No, the list is the responsibility of the list administrator with verification from the secretary. Call the secretary with e-mail address changes. - Motion passed.

Should the Secretary and Treasurer's positions be combined and a new Vice President position formed? Tabled until next year.

Clean Up Fees. Proposed: Add a clean up fee (\$10?) to registration fee for each event. The people who show up for clean up will get their money back; those who don't show up will forfeit their money. Those who stay until the end of clean up will divide up the remaining funds. Ken Barton of the Texas Firearts and Joe Demerico of the Crackerjacks explained both these clubs do this with success. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Current Balance = \$66,000. Profit/Loss statement will be published in the newsletter. The expense of added equipment for Do-It will be amortized over the next few years. Kief spoke about our liability insurance. Spreading out the insurance payments has helped cash flow. John Allen has invited two underwriters from Lloyd's of London to see how we handle our events with the hope that our insurance premiums will be lowered in the future. Russ spoke of WWB - 780 attendees, and we received approx. \$7000 in on site signups. Kief said Lake

Havam City gave WPA \$15,000 and next year this amount will go up to \$17,500.

8. Elections Board of Director's

- A. Vice President Don Oesterle
B. Secretary Rita Oesterle
C. Vice President Publications Tim O'Neil

Area V.P.'s

- Northern Bill Zuber
Northern CA Jay Brown
San Joaquin Valley Lyndee King
L.A. Chris Sparrell
San Diego Joe Madziarczyk
AZ/NV Judd Herberger
Rocky Mt. Charley Wilson
Eastern Foreign Gary Lillich
Hawaii Opau

9. Old Business

Q. There was a question regarding adding an extra day (Wed.) to WWB.

A. There was a great interest shown on this subject. It will be put on the agenda for a future BOD mtg. It was suggested to open for manufacturing on Wed. so they will be able to

shoot on Thurs. It was pointed out by Frances Marquez that as much as we want to accommodate manufacturing, we also need to accommodate all members and we need to be careful about pulling resources from one area to another.

New Business

Kief asked for someone to write an obituary for Tom Keoch for the next newsletter.

There will be a photo-link on our website. If you have any photos you would like to share, get them to Don.

Jay Brown commented on the great after-glows. Kief thanked Karl Modlin on the good work on seminars and asked if everyone was pleased with the scheduling and no overlapping.

Kief thanked Firefox for their dedication to the club in attending all events and accommodating members with early deliveries.

Boekie Timobrich asked if maybe we should drop Hawaii as a separate area since they haven't had any representation in many years.

Earl Cassoria asked if anyone was interested in a 3rd event closer to Northern CA. The Cassoria's are

looking at a site near Reno. This was very popular with the crowd.

Frances Marquez suggested a student internship for training and education. They can volunteer to help at WWB and Do-It as repayment.

Kief moved to adjourn - motion passed.
Meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm.

WWB BOD Minutes March 3, 2003

Call to Order 8:06 pm

Conference Call attendees: Kief Adler, Russ Laurin, Donald

Oesterle, Rita Oesterle, Tim O'Neil

1. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.

2. Treasurer's Report

WWB income excluding membership \$85,914.38

WWB expenditures to date \$70,308.11

Gross profit \$15,606.27

There are still some expenses to be paid, some vendor table income to be collected, and some vendor refunds to process.

3. Insurance cancellation. We are owed about \$3,600 from last insurer now bankrupt.

ACTION ITEM: Kief will send all information to Doug Marlow

4. Bad checks

Action item: Rita will get a flag on their record in the database. Person(s) will not be allowed to attend next event until checks are covered with cash or certified check before event.

Pay Pal vs. credit card pre-payment for events.

Tabled to next meeting

ACTION ITEM: DONALD

6. WWB 2003 attendance

718 members and guests paid. Vendors and Corporate helpers not in this total

7. Manufacturing Day addition to WWB 2004.

Tim O'Neil would be in charge of arrangement for having Tuesday added to schedule. It would require closing the manufacturing area Wed for set up. Suggested that those manufacturers who do not participate in Wednesday set up will not be allowed to continue manufacturing at event.

Also suggested was a higher Manufacture Pass Fee.

ACTION ITEM: Russ and Donald

8. Rewriting of all forms except waiver.

ACTION ITEM: DONALD

9. Clean Up Fee

WWB fee \$5 per application DO IT \$10 per application

Time required to work clean up to get the fee refunded:

Tabled to individual event chairman

10. Update Web Site

ACTION ITEM: DONALD Monthly update of membership sent to BOD first of

the month if there are any changes.

ACTION ITEM: RITA

12. NFA Insurance Fund

Kief made a motion to pledge WPA participation of

five shares for a total of \$5,000.

Motion carried.

13. New membership category Student member will be applied to everyone between the ages of 18-20. Ages 21-24 and providing proof of full time student status (12 credits) will also qualify. Student WPA fee will be 1/2 of regular member fee. Student Event fee will be equal to regular spouse fee.

ACTION ITEM: KIEF WILL EMAIL MORE INFORMATION TO BOD.

14. Newsletters and program WPA bylaws require a minimum of 2 newsletters a year. Tim O'Neil will do 3 newsletters: April 1-15, Sept 1-15, and Dec 1-15. Two event programs will be printed also. The DO IT miler will be sent Aug 1 and the WWB 2004 miler sent Nov 1.

ACTION ITEM: TIM

15. Event chairmen

WWB 2004 Donald and Russ DO IT - Tim and Kevin Bollinger with Mike Hill site chairman

16. WPA jackets

Kief suggested adding a page to the website to promote WPA gear and showing pictures of embroidered jackets offered by Keith Madara as well as a link to Pyro Novelties WPA gear page in order to promote purchases. Tabled until next meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Kief to get further info to the BOD.

17. Adjourn 9:06 pm

Oct - Dec 02

Ordinary Income/Expense (Income Donations)

| | 401.00 | Membership & WB | Registration | 2003 |
|---------------------|--------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Membership | | 1,575.00 | | |
| 2003 Membership | | | | 10,170.00 |
| WB2003 Registration | | | | 14,160.00 |

| | | |
|--|------------------|--|
| Membership & WB Registration - Other | 0.00 | |
| Total Membership & WB Registration | 25,905.00 | |
| Special Events & Activities Do It | | |
| Seminars | 50.00 | |
| T-shirt | 259.00 | Table 6,343.00 |
| | 690.00 | Do It - Other |
| Total Do It | 7,392.00 | |
| Total Special Events & Activities | 7,392.00 | |
| Winter Blast 2003 Meals | | 1,343.00 |
| Vendor Registration | 360.00 | Vendor Table Fee 1,345.00 |
| Total Winter Blast 2003 | 3,083.00 | |
| Total Income | 36,790.00 | |
| Expense Categories Lighting and Electrical 1,300.00 | | |
| Miscellaneous | 44.00 | Office Supplies 434.66 |
| Total Convention | 1,778.66 | |
| Do It | | |
| Afterglow | 552.47 | |
| Aznagaddon | 1,053.89 | |
| Auto rental | 483.66 | |
| Equipment | 6,263.13 | |
| Food vending | 178.68 | |
| Miscellaneous | 300.00 | |
| Radio rental | 300.00 | |
| Security | 792.00 | |
| Supplies | 5,030.01 | |
| Do It - Other | 112.50 | |
| Total Do It | 15,065.34 | |
| General Operations Advertising/Promotion 111.00 | | |
| Communication Telephone | 296.00 | |
| Total Communications | 196.00 | Dues and Subscriptions 121.00 License 521.00 |
| Office Supplies | 26.56 | |
| Officer Stipends | 2,975.00 | |
| Printing and Postage PO Box rental | | 160.00 |
| Postage and Delivery | 77.59 | |
| Total Printing and Postage | 237.59 | |
| Supplies | 493.00 | |
| Total General Operations | 4,489.15 | |
| Total Expense | 21,314.15 | |

Net Income 15,446.85

WPA BOD Minutes April 10, 2003 Call to order 8:04 PDT

Conference Call attendees: Kief Adler, Russ Laurie, Don Osterle, Rita Osterle, Tim O'Neil

Approval of minutes from March 3, 2003 meeting

Treasurer's Report Jan-Mar 2003

Income 93,211.35

Expenses 101,761.89

Net Income -8,320.61

Current bank balance \$ 21,600 (to nearest \$100).

Bud checks

Action item still in progress of resolving 2 checks

There are still outstanding vendor table fees owed the club.

ACTION ITEM: XON COOPER AND RUSS LAURIE

New forms- Don is waiting to hear from Nupufs about possibility of electronic form for event registrations to be put on web and what they need from him to accomplish the task.

Electronic payment for membership and events (Pay Pal)

ACTION ITEM: DON

Student Membership category.

Kief moved to have a student membership category as follows.

All members ages 18 thru 20 will be considered students, and pay the associated lower fees

Proof of full time student status required (12 units) for ages 21 thru 23.

WPA fees will be \$40 for first time membership with \$30 renewal fee.

Event fees will be equal to spouse fee

Motion was approved

WPA Gear

There was a discussion about creating a WPA clothing and gear page on the club's webpage. Keith Midura will be provided a link for his embroidered jackets.

Pyro Novelties will also be provided a link for their WPA clothing and accessories. Also discussed was the WPA logo ownership.

ACTION ITEM: KIEF WILL CONTACT PYRO NOVELTIES.

ACTION ITEM: KIEF WILL GET A PICTURE AND PRICE OF KEITH MIDURA'S JACKET FOR WEB.

Creating a new WPA region in Texas was approved. Ken Barton, President of another club called "Texas Fire Ants," has volunteered

to act as WPA area VP until next business meeting when elections will be held.

Former WPA members, with expired memberships from the past 5 years, will be mailed a postcard inviting them to renew their memberships.

ACTION ITEM: TIM O'NEIL IS TO CONTACT AMERICAN GRAPHICS FOR QUOTE ON PRINTING, ADDRESSING AND MAILING THEM AS BULK RATE.

Firework pictures on Webpage.

ACTION ITEM: DON WILL LOOK INTO LINKS

Newsletter

Tim O'Neil wants all items to him ASAP. He will have a draft for the BOD to review approx. April 18. There should be an article about current members contacting non-current members to come back to the club. The newsletter should be in the mail by end of April, 2003. He will also see about the club needing having a bulk mail license.

Insurance

Kief has already asked Deliff Insurance, as our Broker of Record, to provide a loss history. The NEA insurance has requested this information from WPA. 1/2 million shares of NEA insurance must be sold before it can proceed. NEA will be able to issue D and O insurance.

ACTION ITEM: KIEF

Area meeting and events are not sanctioned WPA events

ACTION ITEM: KIEF WILL PUT NOTICE IN DIGEST.

Links on Web page.

Any link for a commercial product must be by a current member.

Hobbyist link discussed.

ACTION ITEM: DON WILL EMAIL BOD ABOUT HOBBYIST LINKS NEEDING TO BE BY CURRENT MEMBERS

WPA Digest and List will continue to be limited to current members only.

ACTION ITEM: DON TO GET HARDCOPY LIST OF DIGEST MEMBERS FOR RITA TO UPDATE.

ACTION ITEM: KIEF IS TO PUT A NOTE ON THE DIGEST INFORMING ALL ABOUT THE DIGEST BEING CURRENT MEMBER ONLY AND PREPARE ALL SUBSCRIBERS FOR THE POSSIBILITY THAT NON-PAYING SUBSCRIBERS WILL BE ELIMINATED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. A NOTE ABOUT LOCATION OF RENEWAL FORMS WILL BE INCLUDED.

WPA records

ACTION ITEM: DON AND KIEF WILL GET THE RECORDS TO THE CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS (Secretary and Treasurer).

Meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PDT.

This Could Happen Where You Live Editor

Imagine,

You are a normal, pyrotechnic loving enthusiast. You are patriotic and love the 4th of July. You are licensed to shoot display shows and have a great safety record, and desire to conduct displays for a living.

In order to obtain/stores/display class B shells, you have to have your federal license and appropriate storage magazines, so you go about the process of obtaining expensive explosives magazines, and then apply and obtain all of the required federal licenses. Life is good. You are safe, legal, and ready for business.

A new employee in the fire administration is appointed. This person is really unknowledgeable about fireworks rules, and especially federal law, so you try to offer your view of how to interpret fireworks rules, but this person seems to have other ideas, all of which conflict with your rock-solid proof in the CFR book of regulations. It seems as though this person is being coached by a larger company in your state who has befriended and taken the fire authority under their wing. In recent years, this larger company has, step by step, removed what little competition they had, by having the smaller businesses shut down with lies that they have told the State and Local authorities, as well as ATF.

A rule is passed saying that you can only conduct public display shows with product purchased through "an Oregon Approved Wholesaler" and these seem to be only a handful of them, and only one of them who can store in your state. To truck the fireworks in from out of state on the same day of the show would be a safety hazard, and wouldn't give you time to properly fuse and choreograph the display, but if you bought from the in-state company, you wouldn't be able to afford the display since they have raised their price to such a high level that it wouldn't allow you to make a profit from your work.

You decide to import the show in from out of state for cost reasons and you instantly receive a phone call from the fire authority asking why you have "changed wholesalers" to which you reply, "because they are 1/4th the price of our in-state wholesaler". There is no response on the other line. You start noticing that everyone else you know has had their permits processed already, even though you had applied earlier than them. Your friends had purchased from your "in-state wholesaler" and they have been receiving their fireworks already. They don't have storage magazines to store them, but rather they are placing the boxes in their garages and outbuildings. You know that it's a violation, but you don't say anything. You then inquire about being a wholesaler yourself, and are told not to send your application in, because the fire authority doesn't know anywhere in Oregon that you could legally operate. You see, while the in-state business was getting rid of their competition, they passed a zoning law which could not be met by anyone in the industry, and declared themselves to be grand-fathered in. You pick up the phone and complain to the Attorney General's Office, not knowing that the AG's office represents

the Fire Marshal's Office. You file a complaint against the OFSM and the monopolizing wholesaler and the next day you are raided by fire deputies and state police. They claim to have a warrant, and start searching your property, trashing everything in site, looking for anything that resembles a firework, nosing through your personal belongings, nosing at you with looks of disapproval. They cut your steel magazines open with high speed grinders, throwing sparks everywhere. Inside you are glad that they are empty, and you wonder how these people have lived to be as old as they are. You have been arrested for suspicion of storing fireworks in violation of state zoning laws, but since you don't have any fireworks stored, you don't know how they could have possibly obtained a warrant. You also wonder how all of your friends could be storing their fireworks in their garage or house with out having any legal problems. YOU are the only one who has properly approved storage for them, yet you are being harassed. In the back of your mind, you wonder if it's because you have filed a complaint with the state. When it is discovered that you haven't even received your fireworks (a simple call to the out of state wholesaler was all they needed to do) they release you and leave in a hurried rush. It is three days before the Fourth of July, the last week/day you had to get your work done before the stores closed, and the day is gone. They leave you upset, broken hearted, and confused. WHY would they do this to you? You hadn't done anything wrong.

You call a lawyer who is confused about the whole ordeal and says that he needs \$1,000.00 retainer to talk to you, but since you weren't charged with anything, only arrested and released, there is nothing to take to court. You want to sue for their damage, but the retainer is more than the damage—at least, provable damage. A couple days later, you drive out of state with your DOT approved truck and pick up your shells. You had to drive through the night in order to pick them up early and transport them back in time to set up your display show. You are tired, but short on time, and it's a miracle that you are able to complete the unbelievable job ahead of you.

The display is over, and everything went well. The large crowd has left, thinking that whoever had done that show must have made an obscene amount of money, not knowing that it had actually cost you much more money that you had received.

You begin asking questions about the ordeal last Friday, and you realize that you aren't alone. The same thing had just happened to a family about an hour away from you just two weeks prior. They too, had chosen not to purchase from the in-state wholesaler. Only, this person had his fireworks stored (in his approved storage magazine) and the Fire Marshals had stolen them and left them in the local evidence room of the County. His show was a charity for his rotary club, a fund raiser for crippled children. You speak with him and find that he hadn't broken any laws either, except for that bizarre zoning rule, and he wasn't charged with any violation either. The in-state wholesaler / display company had "ruined the day" by doing the display instead, and reaped the rewards of their monopoly. You discover that this kind of event has been happening all across your state, but people are afraid to do or say anything.

One day, several years later, and after many years of grief trying to deal with the abuse that the State Fire Marshall and the monopoly have been dealing you, you read that an 'in-state company' is in violation of zoning laws. These are the same zoning laws that they have used to prevent you and everyone else in the state, from operating. According to state law, they should have their license revoked, but the State Fire Marshal is doing nothing. Days turn into months, and over a year goes by, with no action taken against the company, yet still other companies are being denied a wholesale license due to the same zoning rules. This just doesn't make any sense. How could it be?

Then you hear about an amendment to a bill that has been stuck through the Senate and is going through the legislature. This bill would exempt ONLY the "in-state wholesaler" from state law. The criminals who have prevented you and everyone else from operating are now trying to make themselves the only legal company in the state! How can this possibly be? You discover that this is a violation of your State Constitution. You are outraged. How could one company have so much power? How could one company cause so much heart ache and grief to so many people with out consequences?

You continue digging and keep finding evidence of relationships, financial interests and political interests. You discover hidden owners. You start finding out who is financing who. Your proposed Civil Rights lawsuit is becoming a reality and you wonder how come you have to pay a group of lawyers to have the same basic rights as an illegal operation.

Every morning, you wake up, and come to the realization that this is not a nightmare, but a reality. There is criminal activity happening in the State of Oregon. You've done almost all you can and lay back down for a moment, and pray.

Even though this may not have happened to you, it is important to realize that it could easily become a reality in each of the states we operate in. It is imperative that each and every one of us become aware of pending legislation that would inhibit our ability to operate, not only as business ventures, but as operators and hobbyists. Current legislation in Texas is a prime example when the wrong people make uneducated legislation. This happened in the 1970's in Arizona, the site of our two conventions. If this group fails to act then we should not cry out in pity for our inaction. Get involved and stay involved not only in this organization, but with local groups who are looking out for your best interest.

Report of the Fireworks Foundation By John Steinberg, on behalf of the Trustees of the Fireworks Foundation

A majority of the trustees of the Foundation met on April 5, 2003. On behalf of the Foundation, we wish to express our gratitude to the members of the FGI for funding the Foundation by making an initial grant and by paying the costs associated with the formation of this Foundation.

As previously reported, the Foundation now enjoys IRS Section 501 (c) (3) status. Donations made to the Foundation are fully tax-deductible for the donor. In granting the tax deductible status to the Fireworks Foundation, the IRS now requires that the Foundation solicit and receive donations and make appropriate expenditures of funds consistent with the mission in its charter.

We are committed, as previously stated, to preserving intact, an amount of principal equal to our founding grant. Our assets should not ever be less than the \$175,000.00 initial founding grant. All expenditures must be funded by future donations and interest earned.

Before asking for donations, the trustees wanted to have a clear idea as to how these funds would be used. The trustees identified four areas where the Foundation could be of financial assistance:

- 1) Publications: These are a number of pyrotechnic publications that benefit to the hobbyist fireworks communities that could now apply for grants. The cost of disseminating urgently required information could also be funded by the Foundation.
- 2) Legal Defense Funds: Individuals and clubs representing the hobbyist fireworks community may now apply to the Foundation for financial grants of assistance consistent with our means to respond to such requests as outlined above.
- 3) New Fireworks Clubs: The limited grants available from the FGI (\$250.00) are woefully inadequate compared to the need for any new club to raise \$10,000.00 in capital to cover the expenditures related to the first year of operation, given insurance costs alone exceeding \$5,000.00. FGI and other club members wishing to form new clubs may now apply for interest-free loans and/or limited grants to assist in the formation of new regional fireworks clubs. Of interest, should a group of members wish to form a club, they could make tax-deductible donations to the Foundation and subsequently apply to the Foundation for grants and loans.
- 4) Insurance: The trustees of the Foundation are considering allocating \$5000.00 of our assets to purchase shares in the new insurance captive being formed by members of the NFA and others in the pyrotechnics community. This would be an investment, not expenditure. However, as with all investments, some risk entails. The trustees will debate this issue and report our decision in the next report from the Foundation.

We now ask for donations from all members of the hobbyist pyrotechnics community, that we may satisfy the

requirements of the IRS and begin to make expenditures of assets that fulfill our stated mission. The trustees have each pledged to start this process by making personal donations. Please make checks payable to "The Fireworks Foundation" and mail them to: Michael Swisher Treasurer, the Fireworks Foundation 14511 Otada Blvd. N Stillwater, MN 55082. You will be provided a receipt documenting your fully tax-deductible donation.

Winterblast 2003, "A Fireworks Fantasy"

Greetings fellow pyros:

As Chairman and Co-Chairman of this year's Winterblast we want to thank everybody who attended our great event, and say to those of you who missed it "better make plans to attend next year" as you missed out on some truly great pyro! Many thanks go out to all the staff and volunteers that helped make this year's Winterblast such a smooth running operation.

We would like to thank Matt Sutcliffe and the hard working people from Premier Pyrotechnics for the outstanding display on Saturday night. A special "thank you" to Joe Bartolotta and Kevin Broecker from Fireworks America and Tim O'Neil from Havasu Pyrotechnics for their efforts in producing such a memorable show at SARA Park on Sunday night. Their shows, along with the wonderful demonstrations, were fantastic, and truly demonstrated the love and devotion to the artistry we have come to know and love ourselves. They really filled the sky with outstanding pyro!

We all had a great time, once again, in beautiful Lake Havasu City and wish to thank all of the people from the City who helped us by making improvements to Sara Park and other efforts that contributed to make our event a success. We had many of our great vendors return again this year, and we also had the pleasure of welcoming some new vendors this year to add to the array of products for all to enjoy.

The weather was a little scary in the beginning of the week during setup, but by the start of the event it cleared up and was pleasant. The afterglows were again a phenomenal success. We wish to thank all of the generous sponsors of this year's afterglows too; we couldn't have done it without your generosity. We must have broken the record on attendance, because the room was full of happy, noisy pyros every night, it was standing room only, and nobody went away hungry! Great job of coordinating it Kief!

Now that the smoke has cleared, and Winterblast is just a fond memory glowing in our hearts and minds, we must turn our efforts to Do-It by the River 2003. Both Russ and Don (your Winterblast co-chairs for 2002, 2003, and 2004) have decided to take a little break, and let Tim O'Neil, and Kevin Bollinger take control of this year's Do-It. This will give us a chance to have some fun, and light some fires at an event without having to worry about every detail of the event. Don't forget we still are working hard year-round at our duties on the club's Board of Directors. Don't worry, we will

be there to volunteer for set up, clean up and work some volunteer shifts too (like everybody attending the event should).

Until then, be safe, light up the sky, and make some noise!

Russ Laurie - WWB XIV Chairman, WPA Treasurer
Don Oestelo - WWB XIV Co-Chairman, WPA VP

Danny Clark Defense Fund By John Steinberg

It is with a very heavy heart indeed that I now seek your assistance in raising the funds necessary to provide legal representation for Danny Clark.

As some of you may know, Danny Clark was visited by the ATF and other agencies last year. While we had all hoped for a negotiated resolution to this incident, the federal government has decided to take this case to court and to proceed with a trial and prosecution.

Danny Clark did not, so far as I am aware, make and sell any destructive devices. He did not divert any display fireworks for sale to the public. He neither injured any persons nor destroyed any property. Such cases are usually resolved without recourse to trial, conviction or imprisonment.

Being a charitable sort, I am willing to recognize that there are two sides to any dispute. Perhaps the feds genuinely believe that fireworks clubs are merely subterfuges for illegal activities as described above. As we all know, they are anything but! By providing a vigorous defense for Danny Clark, we hope to establish that fireworks clubs are a law-abiding community. When errors in judgment are made, they should be resolved by administrative actions, not criminal prosecution.

Danny Clark has served our community well and faithfully. He has been president of the Crackerjacks for three years. He helped engineer, with John Sagaria and others, a superb display at the 2002 PGI convention. He currently serves the PGI as a director of training programs for recertifying of PGI certified trainers. He serves as the web site master for the PGI web site. Danny has conducted numerous training programs, both for operator training and for law enforcement. He is always available as a friend to any pyro. He conducted our first PGI international training program last year. I have known Danny for many years and have always known him to be a positive influence in our community and a good and loyal friend.

I do not believe that we should use our legal defense funds to defend any person who does any of the following four things:

- 1) Sells destructive devices such as M-80's to the public.
- 2) Diverts display fireworks for sale to the unlicensed and untrained public.

3) Causes deliberate damage to property through misuse of fireworks.

4) Causes deliberate injury to persons through misuse of fireworks. Danny has not, nor is he alleged to have done, any of these things.

When a person runs afoul of the multitude of fireworks regulations (an easy thing to do) but does none of the above, I believe our entire community should rally to his or her defense.

Last year we raised over \$7500.00 and expended \$5000.00. In conversations with Danny's attorneys at Brooke and Marshert, P.C., I have been informed that this legal defense, in a federal trial, where experts will be needed and many hours will be invested by the legal team, that defense costs could easily exceed \$25,000.00.

The economic damage to Danny's business as he works on his defense will be huge. The emotional toll will be incalculable. Let's shoulder the financial burden of raising the necessary funds to spare Danny at least that one burden.

Our community as a whole has already suffered as Danny Clark has reluctantly concluded that he must resign as Crackerjacks president to have the time he needs to work with his attorneys on his defense.

I am going to ask the PGI to contribute \$5000.00. I am going to ask the Fireworks Foundation to contribute \$1000.00. I am going to ask the Crackerjacks to raise and contribute \$5000.00. I am also going to ask our extended community to raise at least another \$10,000.00.

If we could get 1000 people to give \$250.00, we could raise a sufficiently large defense fund for hobbyist pyros (yes - a quarter of a million dollars!) that we could help educate and direct federal prosecutors toward focusing their federal prosecution efforts only on cases that involve one of the four clearly criminal acts defined above. Let us mount so strong a defense for all others in our community who are charged, as Danny Clark has been, that future prosecutions are avoided for those who have simply made errors in judgment, but who pose no threat to the public at large.

I, personally, pledge \$250.00 - \$125.00 to the Danny Clark Defense Fund and \$125.00 to the Fireworks Foundation for use in legal defense fund grants. I ask every single person reading this article to do the same!

Here are the specifics:

- 1) Tom Handel and I have agreed to administer the Danny Clark Defense Fund.
- 2) Please make checks payable to "THE FIREWORKS FOUNDATION". Do NOT make them payable to me. In this manner, you are making a tax-deductible donation.
- 3) You MUST note on the check that these funds are for THE DANNY CLARK DEFENSE FUND. Otherwise they will go into the general funds of the Foundation. At least you'll still get a tax deduction.
- 4) Mail the checks to me at: John Steinberg, 3044 Carriage Road, Rosdalltown, Maryland 21133-4517.

5) I will forward them in batches to the Foundation and will keep an account of all donations.

6) Tom Handel will establish a checking account for the Danny Clark Defense Fund.

7) Periodically, the Foundation will send Tom Handel checks for deposits.

8) Tom Handel will make payments to the lawyers, as such payments are required.

9) At the conclusion of this matter, any remaining funds will be set aside, within the Foundation, for use in defense of other hobbyist pyros who are in need of assistance.

So, as soon as you read this, write a check, as large a check as you can, and send it immediately. I will make periodic reports for the club e-mail lists and newsletters. Thank you.

Fact or Fiction - KNO3 Phenomena - Ultimately Intrinsic Blackpowder

An Old Timer

This discussion is specifically on reducing KNO3 particulate size, not a study of charcoal type (hard) or oxidizer (sometimes even sulfur acts like an "oxidizer" - zinc and sulfur).

There really is no reason to create faster black powder for fireworks devices than what traditional screening, milling, etc., produces. I posted this narrative not to support a definitive fact, rather to stimulate further curiosity and investigation of a phenomenon by individuals whose passion is the quest for the fastest blackpowder.

Phenomena - It seems from an empirical standpoint that each time the KNO3 crystal is ground or reduced further in particulate size it has the potential of releasing minute amounts of additional moisture into the surrounding particulate. This observation might explain why many amateur BP milled mixtures compact against the side of the milling jar even though all initial ingredients are seemingly dry prior to milling.

Several possible factors affecting the amount of moisture in KNO3:

- Amateur's receive KNO3 that has been repacked (exposed to ambient moisture)
- Oxidizer kept in plastic Ziploc or paper bags (not truly moisture proof over time)
- No desiccant used in primary packaging container or repack
- Manufacturing/Packing process leaves minute amounts of moisture in KNO3 crystal
- Impurities in the KNO3 are hygroscopic

Empirical Observation:

KNO3 was ball milled in an optimized mill - 20 minutes later the KNO3 was packed around the inside of the milling jar. KNO3 was removed and placed on Kraft paper sheet - large rolling pin was used to reduce lumps to particulate quickly. Paper picnic plate was filled so that there was a 1/4 to 1/2 inch deep layer filling the paper plate. The plate was placed in a 600-watt microwave oven and tamped on HI for two minutes. When the plate came out of the microwave the top surface had formed a crust or crumbly top texture that was easily broken up with a wooden spoon. Once the KNO3 was cool it was reintroduced into the milling jar and milled another 20 minutes. This process is continued until the KNO3 no longer creates a crust when dried in the microwave and/or packs against the milling jar after additional cycles of reduction/milling.

It is interesting that even this method requires repetitive cycling of oven and milling to reach an air-foot particle size. I have seen KNO3 (literally air float) with no free flowing additives that was processed this way sealed in a glass jar with desiccant pack, that did not lump or pack up when stored for over five years.

Interesting note: Sun drying even in the desert does not seem to eliminate the moisture like the microwave oven.

As to BP milling, it is imperative of course that both the sulfur and charcoal are "bone dry" as well. This is not to say that ultimately a percentage of moisture is not beneficial or down right necessary to the uniformity of the burn rate, and to providing the "solvent" for adhering the particulate powder into a solid mass for casting. The finer the particulate size and the more intimate mixed the three ingredients are for any given BP formulation, the faster and cleaner the powder will burn. Always mill remotely and be aware, dry powder is one thing, dry environment when opening milling jars is another. Static can bite invisibly especially the more airborne the particulate.

Fact or Fiction - Only your experimentation will validate!

POWDERING AND PURIFYING POTASSIUM NITRATE

Chris Spurrell

POWDERING

There are many sources for KNO_3 . You can find small plastic bags of it called "nitro" in some Asian grocery stores. I've bought it as "Brite-Life" brand saltpeter [sic] at Long's Drug (and it had an expiration date!) It's at most of the major home improvement centers as "Stump Remover" (whereas historically it's been a stump puller). In my line of work, there's lots of reagent grade KNO_3 lying around. But, the pyro favorite is fertilizer grade potassium nitrate - often with the brand name "K-Power". Figure on spending less than \$20 for a 50 lb. Bag if you know where to shop.

My first bag of K-Power went right into my rock tumbler/ball mill. After an evening of milling I had a fairly fine powder. But by the next day, instead of having "air float" KNO_3 I had one huge snowball of hard packed powder. Other people have complained of the stuff packing against the walls of the milling jar. Since this nitrate was going to be used in rockets and fountains I wanted to avoid the use of anti-cake agents. After several more similar frustrating experiences I decided to try drying it in an oven before milling. (One benefit of living alone is the free use of kitchen equipment.) A couple pounds of saltpeter spread on cookie sheets and placed in a warm (approx 225 F.) oven immediately forms a hard crust as the water leaves. The next morning I tried grinding this "drier" K-Power. It powdered much better but it too eventually formed a "snowball". When the powder from the broken up snowball was dried like before it again formed a hard crust. Obviously, there's water trapped inside the crystals that modest drying won't remove.

Now the dried-ground-dried KNO_3 not only powdered so fine that you can't feel any texture when you rub it between your fingers, but it also does not cake or form chunks months later in storage. Finally, air float nitrate!

PURIFYING

The fertilizer grade is notably different from the other grades. While the others are pure white, the K-Power has a definite brown cast to it. There is obviously something else in there. The presence of foreign substances raises a lot of questions, like: Does it affect the stability or ignition temperature? Will it affect the burn rate or color? Will it have the same anion or type of contamination when I buy it the next time? While generations of pyros have made fertilizer grade material work for them, it's good to know that there is a way out, a way to eliminate the variable of unknown purity. It's easy, it's rather fun and it goes by the cumbersome name - recrystallization.

Recrystallization sounds fancy but it is slightly more difficult than boiling water but less complicated than making coffee. Undoubtedly, people would do this for recreation if they knew what a richly satisfying experience it was.

It's all based on the facts that some chemicals, especially KNO_3 , are vastly more soluble in hot water than in cold water, and, that crystal growing is a wonderfully ordered

phenomenon which by nature excludes foreign material. This is to say, a crystal naturally purifies itself as it grows.

With KNO_3 one can dissolve about half a pound in one quart of water at room temperature. But you can dissolve several pounds in a quart of boiling water. Once that boiling water cools you get a forest of beautiful crystals of pure KNO_3 . So here's what you do:

Get a pot of water up to boiling.

Add as much KNO_3 as will dissolve.

Get it back to boiling.

Add as much KNO_3 as will dissolve.

Okay-do it once more.

Turn off the heat and let it cool slowly.

Pour off the ugly brown water and admire your pure crystals.

Go back to the beginning of this article to figure out how to dry and powder the stuff.

RECRYSTALLIZATION NOTES

I haven't tried using an aluminum pot, and I probably won't.

KNO_3 is available in Southern Ca at Yamada Co. in Gardena for \$13.50/b.

Adding KNO_3 cools the water. If you wanted to (after the first addition) you could stir the previously boiling water with your finger. What don't you trust me?

The more slowly the water cools, the bigger and purer the crystals.

You can repeat this process a couple times with distilled water and achieve ultra high purity.

You can evaporate the decanted KNO_3 solution and get more crystals but they won't be as pure.

You can add alcohol to get more KNO_3 to precipitate but it probably isn't worth it.

Enjoy your kitchen chemistry but don't tell any of the pyro chemical suppliers where you heard it.





FIREWORKS MIBROS FOR SALE

1-1-1 The Wuester/Winter Blast XIV at Lake Havasu City Arizona. This Blast is open to all ages and is held at the Lake Havasu City Fairgrounds. For more information call 908-233-1111 or visit our website at www.wuester.com.

1-1-2 2012 National Fireworks Association 2012 Expo. This is a great opportunity for you to see the latest in fireworks technology. For more information call 908-233-1111 or visit our website at www.wuester.com.

1-1-3 2012 FBI Convention in Reno. This is a great opportunity for you to see the latest in fireworks technology. For more information call 908-233-1111 or visit our website at www.wuester.com.

Edgar Hensberger
 908-233-1111
 1000 W. 1st St.
 Reno, NV 89502



