



November/December 2001

VOLUME 8 NUMBER 6

**T.H.O.R. - THE HEARTLAND ORGANIZATION OF ROCKETRY
2001 Events Calendar**

THOR WEB PAGE
www.tripoli.org/tra_ne/THOR/thor.html

Rocketman Central

By Richard Burney, Secretary and Newsletter Editor
THOR# 8, NAR# 69543, TRA# 6140

Monthly Meeting Schedule for Fall:
Tuesday November 6th, Tuesday
December 4th, and Tuesday January
8th. Each meeting will start at 7:00 PM
at the La Vista Community Center.

Still Standing...

November

Event: Low Power Launch.

When: Sunday the 11th, Noon to ?

Where: La Vista Sports Complex.

Fee: Free.

Description: Low power sport flying.

For More Information:

Event: High Power Launch.

When: Saturday the 17th, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Where: Carroll, IA or Westside, IA (Mark's house).

Ceiling: TBA.

Fee: \$5.

Description: Mainly a high power event, but regular model rockets are flown, too.

For More Information: Check the rocketry hotline (402-896-2069) for any delays or cancellations if weather looks questionable. Rescheduled from the 24th

December

Event: Christmas Party.

When: Friday the 7th.

Where: Larry Drake's house.

Fee: Free... but make sure to bring food and drinks.

Description: THOR's annual Christmas party!

TRIPOLI NEBRASKA WEB PAGE
www.tripoli.org/tra_ne/nebraska.htm



(Picture courtesy of Mike Collins)

I would like to say that the thoughts and prayers of the membership of THOR is with those who have been directly effected by the terrorist attacks on our country that took place on September the 11th, the men and women of our armed forces as they are currently engaged in combat in Afghanistan and possibly other places in the months ahead, and with our leaders as they make their decisions in leading and protecting this country.

Also, our prayers and condolences go out to the staff and employees of AeroTech, which had its main production facility severely damaged by a fire on October the 15th. One of AeroTech's employees died from injuries sustained in this accident while two others remain hospitalized from burns that they had sustained. This tragedy will make the hobby of high power rocketry more difficult in the months ahead, as supplies of AeroTech's high power rocket motors have already started to dwindle up. But yet, AeroTech, like the nation in general, is rising up from the ashes of the calamities of the last few months, and is pushing forward on rebuilding.

High Power Rocketry Motors and Supplies available through Omaha and Lincoln Area HobbyTowns...

During the last few months, the Omaha area HobbyTowns (the La Vista, West Maple St., and Council Bluffs stores) have now become a source for Public Missiles Limited kits and parts. John Carroll (who also was the president of the Omaha Rocket Club back in the mid 1990's) can special order most any of PML's parts and kits that are not out on the stores' shelves. John has also indicated that he is able to acquire Hypertek hybrid hardware. John plans on attending the November or another future THOR meeting to discuss in further detail what he is able to do for us high power rocketeers in the Omaha area.

The Lincoln HobbyTown has also become a high power rocketry source. For the last few months, they have also been carrying PML parts and kits. Just a few weeks before the fire at AeroTech, they had just stocked up on 29 and 38mm reloads in the H, I, and J range, including the new Redline motors. Not surprisingly, all of the high power reloads have been cleared out during the last few weeks, but they do have some high power reload casings still on hand.

Dude, where's my Dude?...

Seems like Estes has found a winner with this rocket! Though the rocket is over seven feet tall and over five inches in diameter, it flies on just D12's and hardly weighs a thing... it's practically a rocket powered balloon (you fill it up with your own breath)! A number of THOR members, along with numerous rocketeers across the country, have built and flown this rocket and really seem to like it. Because of its large size and appearance, it makes a great crowd pleaser! I just

wonder when someone will fill one up with either helium or hydrogen and try to go for a duration record!☺

The main gist of the rest of the newsletter will be about the fire that happened at AeroTech. I also have what will be the first gallery of pictures taken from Nebraska Heat IV this past June. I unfortunately have not had the time or energy to get a detailed article written up, but I have decided to get these pictures that I took presented before the event gets too far out of our memories.

Fire at AeroTech



These pictures were taken of AeroTech's main production facility the day after the fire. (Brent McNeely)

To the BOD, Prefects, and other interested persons,

16 October 2001 - As most of you know by now, AeroTech's main production facility completely burned down yesterday. The fire started approximately 12:15 PM - injuring three people, 1 critical, 1 serious, and one with less injuries. Thankfully, even the most critical will survive. (*Editor's note: one of the injured employees, Avelino Corpuz, died two weeks later*).

Due to legal issues, no statements of any substance will be forthcoming real soon. I was told yesterday that the fire started during a "coring" process. This fire was contained, but re-ignited around 4:00 PM. This second fire took out the remaining building, including ISP, and several other businesses. The fire

was still burning at 6:00 AM this morning. I watched live coverage last night on Web TV at www.klastv.com from a camera located on the Stratosphere Tower.

It is also much too early to discuss "recovery" or to assess the near and long term damage to the hobby. As of this moment our thoughts and prayers are with the AeroTech staff, their families, employees, and all those others who have lost their jobs. I know many of you are going to have questions that cannot be answered right now. All I can ask is that you be patient and let all of this sort itself out. As with everything else we have had to deal with, this too shall pass.

Without putting any kind of a spin on things, all I can say is this is real bad at this moment - not just for AeroTech, but for the hobby. However, I'm still confident the resilient rocketry-related businesses and rocketeers will bounce back, even if the next year is very lean. We will soon learn whether or not the other manufacturers can step up production and keep this thing rolling.

Bruce E. Kelly, President - Tripoli Rocketry Association

AeroTech Public Statement

October 17, 2001

Web posted at: 6:22 PM EDT Las Vegas, NV (ROL Newswire) -- Early afternoon on October 15th, we at AeroTech experienced a fire at our main facility. At this time the cause is not known and remains under investigation.

AeroTech Inc. is cooperating fully with all state, federal and local agencies in their investigation into the causes of this tragic event. As you know, our operations have set an example for safety in the past and we hope that, through this unfortunate incident, we can learn how to make our operations even safer in the future.

This incident has resulted in injuries to several employees, three of whom remain in the care of hospital staff here in Las Vegas.

Our thoughts and prayers are focused on the welfare of these men, and their loved ones, who are an integral part of the entire AeroTech family. We would ask that you would also place them in your thoughts and prayers.

In response to the questions about AeroTech's future, we can note that our kit facility was not involved in the incident and we anticipate that we will be able to resume shipment of kits and kit parts in the very near future.

We would like to assure our customers that we have recovered the information needed to restore motor and hardware production and are working now on the best way to achieve this goal.

As the first step towards accomplishing these goals we are in process of reestablishing our administrative offices

at our kit facility. Arrangements have been made to have any correspondence forwarded to us there. As communication channels are established we will post the information on our web site and we will be contacting our customers individually as the week progresses.

Although we are not yet able to specify a schedule for our recovery we will, however, remain in close contact with our customers and the rocketry community at large as planning proceeds.

AeroTech sincerely thanks the many people who have offered their assistance and, in particular, acknowledge and appreciate the intent to establish a fund to assist the AeroTech employees who have been impacted by Monday's fire. This generous gesture was communicated to us yesterday by Brent McNeely, publisher of Extreme Rocketry magazine, who has volunteered to coordinate this effort.

Thank you so very much for your concerns and expression of commitment to AeroTech. We will be here to celebrate our 20th anniversary next year and we invite you to share it with us.

Sincerely,

The Staff and Employees of AeroTech, Inc.

AeroTech to Resume Motor Production

October 19, 2001

Web posted at: 7:41 PM EDT Las Vegas, NV (ROL Newswire) -- AeroTech is pleased to announce that they are committed to resumption of motor production as soon as possible. As of today, Friday October 19, AeroTech has identified several options which will allow the company to resume motor production; these plans have the full support of the company's financial investors. AeroTech will communicate this schedule as it develops. They would also like to thank those who have expressed concern for the injured employees.

Note: A benefit fund was established Wednesday October 17th to help out the AeroTech employees impacted by the fire on Monday. Those wishing to send donations may make checks payable to:

AeroTech Inc., Benefit Fund
Wells Fargo Acct# 2002696177

Checks may be mailed to:
AeroTech Inc., Benefit Fund
c/o Extreme Rocketry Magazine
109 E. Charleston Blvd., Ste. 101
Las Vegas, NV 89101

All money received will go to those impacted by the fire. The account will be managed by Brent McNeely (RocketeerMedia) after consultation with AeroTech.

AeroTech Recovery Continues

November 2, 2001

Web posted at: 4:13 PM EST Las Vegas, NV (ROL Newswire) -- AeroTech is pleased to announce that they will be in attendance at next week's ROCstock launch. They will be sponsoring a limited number of Level 1 certification at with the H128 White Lightning™ motor (medium delay). Those interested can register for their motor at the AeroTech booth.

With regards to resumption of motor production, AeroTech is anticipating release of more specific information at the upcoming Turkey Shoot rocket launch near Las Vegas, NV, which is scheduled for November 23 -25.

AeroTech would like to notify all of it's customers that all the old phone numbers are inoperative and the following contact information can be used at this time:

Address:
AeroTech, Inc.
3100 E. Charleston Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89104

Phone: 702-641-5988

Fax: Please call Diane at 702-641-5988 for fax number.

Sales and marketing questions can be directed to Mike Martens at his e-mail address mmartens@aerotech-rocketry.com.

AeroTech kits and piece parts are still available. Purchase inquires about specific AeroTech orders can be directed to Diane Carlson at dcarlson@aerotech-rocketry.com.

Warranty and customer service e-mail will be resumed next week. Please bear with the process as AeroTech works towards resumption of regular service. Each warranty/customer service concern will be acknowledged as it is received.

AeroTech would like to again thank all the people for their continued expressions of concern and offers of assistance.

Source: AeroTech, Inc.

Nebraska Heat IV Photo Gallery Part 1

By Richard Burney

Better late than never! Here are the first round of pictures I took from Nebraska Heat IV which ran from June 23rd to the 24th.



Bruce prepares Super Mario for an M1419 flight on Sunday.



The high power pads are loaded up for action!



The author pauses for a moment to smile and pose with his collection of rockets.



Mike Collins and his PML Arial.



Arley Davis and family out for some fun and sun!



The author with his famous (er, infamous?) *South Park* themed Minie Magg known as *I Killed Kenny*.



Mike's Arial lifts off on an I161.



Liftoff on an H242.



Tony Cochran with his Binder Design Thug.

THOR Meeting Minutes: September/October

Compiled by Richard Burney, Secretary

THOR Meeting Minutes 9/4/01

Attendance: Bruce Lee, Richard Burney, Kevin Rich, Devin Rich, Arley Davis, Candy Davis, Jacob Davis, Jeff Moon, Greg Rothman, Caitlen Rothman, Kevin Trojanowski, Denis Golbert, Tobe Wood, Jen, Doug Deden, Kathy McGinnis, Larry Drake, and Jon Damme.

Meeting starts at 19:15.

Some of the major events from AIRFest this past weekend are discussed. Bruce Lee's *Dr. Mario* was damaged as a result of a flight attempt on an experimental K Thunderflame motor he made. Arley shows the damage that his PML Pterodactyl sustained as a result of a cato from the new Aerotech Redline J motor designed for the 38/720 case. Arley had diligently rebuilt his Pterodactyl after sustaining heavy damage from a recovery mishap a few months earlier at Nebraska Heat IV.

First TV, the company that produces *Maximum Exposure*, is interested in producing a rocketry program that would air several times a year. The producers have contacted Bruce about this and Bruce could end up being a technical supervisor for the show.

Ky Michaelson's CSXT's next flight may be delayed until later this year (*Editor's note: this was before the events that transpired on September 11th*). The CSXT, in its current form, stands 17 feet tall, 8.5 inches in diameter, and has a propellant slug that is 11 feet tall.

Arley shows off the new Estes The Dude rocket. In essence, this is a rocket powered balloon! All you have to do is blow it up with your own breath. When finished flying for the day, deflate the rocket for transportation and storage.

Kevin Rich flew a Dude at the field at Ft. Dodge where he was parachuting at recently. The tall silver rocket, gathered a crowd. One woman in particular had a peculiar interest for it. ☺

Bruce talks about what it takes to make Thunderflame motors. Bruce shows the parts that you get with the reload kit sets and the motor hardware you use. Bruce made a nitrous K motor using Thunderflame slugs a part of the hybrid mix. When Bruce flew this K in *Dr. Mario* at AIRFest, the payload section compressed the main tube, the payload section separated, the shock cord zippered the main tube, and the main tube section violently spun around as it descended on its parachute since the motor was still under power. When the motor was later removed, it was discovered that the K had burned so hot that it had burned a hole in the side of the case. Bruce is considering to retire *Dr. Mario* once and for all.

Kevin Trojanowski has more Fire on the Farm IV shirts to sell off along with rail buttons, too.

Dave Pares' Level 3/X-Prize proof-of-concept vehicle will probably fly next spring instead of October.

John Baumfalk may be putting a bid in for LDRS XXII to be held at Argonia, Kansas in 2003. If this does happen, Bruce is seriously talking about rebuilding the 1/3rd scale Mercury Redstone for another attempt.

Nebraska Heat is to be repaired over the winter in order to be flown at LDRS XXI next summer. The N2000 is the likely candidate for the main motor for this flight.

According to Kathy McGinnis, the Swanson Library at 90th and Dodge Street has books up for sale Friday through Sunday. One book she picked up from one of those sales was a book on Robert Goddard's life.

We will have a raffle at the October meeting since Kathy has some stuff to get rid of (*Editor's note: I don't think we had the raffle at the October meeting* ☺).

Greg Rothman plans on his to do his Level 2 flight later this month (*Editor's note: of course this didn't happen as a result of the FAA banning all high power flying in the weeks after the terrorist attacks on the 11th*).

Treasurer's report (courtesy Larry Drake) – THOR is acquiring a permanent Porta Potty for \$200; it will cost \$40 for each time it's to be serviced. Currently there is \$363.68 in the THOR account.

Candy is working on repairing *Witch Candy* for a future flight. *Witch Candy* is an upscale of the old Estes Zoom Broom. Candy flew *Witch Candy* for her Level 2 back in October 1999 (Nebraska Heat II).

Arley recently got the new PML Intruder kit.

Rich passes around a copy of the flyer Estes has for the new E-9 motor (*Editor's note: it came out for sale in mid September*).

Meeting adjourned at 21:45.

THOR Meeting Minutes 10/2/01

Attendance: Bruce Lee, Richard Burney, Candy Davis, Jacob Davis, Arly Davis, Jeff Moon, Jon Damme, Greg Rothman, Mike Slater, Kathy McGinnis, Doug Deden, Dennis Gilbert, Kevin Trojanowski, Tobe Wood, Dave Pares, and Allyson Pares.

Meeting starts at 19:15.

Waivers for high power rocketry may be valid once again this weekend (October 6th and 7th). High power rocketry launches the last few weekends had been cancelled as a result of the terrorist attacks on the US on September 11th. Many local and national high power launches were effected by the FAA canceling waivers throughout September.

There was an Estes Dude drag race at the sport launch at the LaVista Sports Complex on September 9th. This was also the Field of Wings event held by John Carroll. The planned Egg Lifter contest has now been rescheduled for October 14th.

Bruce will be ordering an 11.41" type tube from PML for rebuilding the midsection of the *Nebraska Heat*. Besides flying the *Nebraska Heat* at LDRS XXI next summer, Bruce along with Lyle Woodrum (who now resides down in Texas) are considering flying the *Bomb Pop* on a cluster of three M1315's or an Aerotech O motor at LDRS. Lyle is also planning on building another upscale of the Gemini DC for another Level 3 attempt.

As mentioned at last month's meeting, there is a good chance that LDRS XXII (2003) may be at Argonia, Kansas.

Treasurer's report (courtesy Larry Drake) - \$231 will be applied to the porta potty, \$30 for servicing. \$320 left over in THOR account.

Mike Slater is working on an airfoil chute that he might accommodate servos to control the descent rate and direction of the rocket by remote.

Greg hopes to try for his Level 2 at the Pickrell launch on the 27th.

Dave Pares passes around his X-15 book (*X-15: The NASA Mission Reports – Apogee Books*). Dave shows the work he has done on part of the structure of his Level 3/X-Prize proof-of-concept vehicle for his manned space attempt aircraft (*Bluebird*).



Dave Pares presents at the October THOR meeting part of the structure that will go to his Level 3 project (the *Bluebird*) which also acts as his proof of concept vehicle for his X-Prize attempt to get a crew of three passengers to the edge of space.



Dave holds a model of the planned *Bluebird* while talking into further detail about the project.

Arley passes around a picture album of the repair work he did on his PML Pterodactyl after its mishap at Nebraska Heat IV and the damage it later took at AIRFest.

According to Kevin Trojanowski, Aerotech's M class Redline motors are having a high cato rate, but the other Redlines are performing well so far.

Meeting adjourned at 21:10.

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NAR SECTION 562 Leader

Arley Davis

The Heartland Organization of Rocketry ("THOR") is an officially sanctioned section, #562, of the National Association of Rocketry (NAR).

Tripoli Nebraska #46 is an official Prefecture of the Tripoli Rocketry Association, Inc.

If you are interested in joining The Heartland Organization of Rocketry (T.H.O.R.) simply fill out an application and mail it to:

T.H.O.R.
6211 South 141 St.
Omaha, NE 68137

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month, 7:00PM at the LaVista Community Center at 8116 Parkview St, La Vista NE (turn east at the Sinclair Gas Station on 84th St.). Visitors are welcome to attend. For club launch time, launch location or general information call The Heartland Organization of Rocketry at 402-896-2069. THOR strictly follows the safety guidelines set for by the National Association of Rocketry and Tripoli Rocketry Association, Inc.

For more information call The Heartland Organization of Rocketry at (402) 896-2069 and leave a voice mail that will be returned in a few days.

T.H.O.R Membership Application

Personal information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Hobby information

How long have you been involved in Rocketry? _____

Are you a member of a national Rocketry Organization:
NAR# _____ TRA# _____ NERO# _____

Rates (1/2 year memberships divide by 2 and add \$1)

Family membership - \$36

Senior (18 and up) - \$24

Junior (under 18) - \$12

Correspondence - \$10

(people over 50 miles from Omaha)

Newsletter only - \$6

(6 issues per year)

**Membership in The Heartland
Organization of Rocketry is open to
all interested parties.**

I agree to comply with the THOR policies as pertains to the safety guidelines set forth by the NAR and Tripoli. Failure to do so is grounds for expulsion.

Signature _____

Dated: _____