

The Phantom Focus

Volume 2, Issue 12

Summer 2009

Special points of interest:

- Anniston 2009
- Knoxville IPMS Show
- Stretching Sprue How-to
- New Afterburner Decals
- Dr. Phil
- 1/48 F-16 Construction

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Anniston 2009 Coverage by Will Nichols

Another year, another Anniston show in the books! And this one was a smashing success!

We had 343 models entered, and while that was down from last years numbers, overall the show was a financial success for the club. More importantly, every-

one had a good time. More people have complimented this years show both publically and privately than I have ever heard or seen before. The entire club deserves a pat on the back for that one.

The raffle lived up to its usual high standards. There were just about two hundred (200!) models, books, decals, & accessories in this years event, including a framed, signed print of Ace of Aces Erich Hartmann graciously donated by Lynn Jones. The print was a

real draw for the raffle, and was given as one of our three grand prizes along with a 1/32 Fisher Sea Fury & a framed Smithsonian B-17 print donated by Jim Burchfield. To everyone else who contributed to this years raffle, I send my sincerest thanks. Without your contributions each year of time, money, and kits, the raffle could not be what it has become.



Anniston 2009



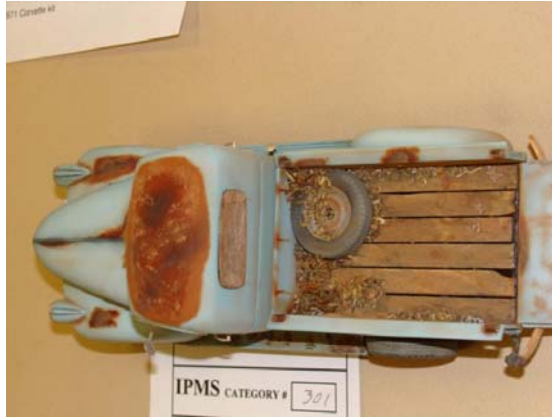
Our "Themeless Suckers" motif went over very well. Modelers that I spoke to at the show enjoyed not being constrained by a certain anniversary or paint scheme to build to try for a one-off special award. Giving modelers the freedom to build as

they saw fit was a good idea, & should be kept in mind when planning future event, as is evident with next years show, the ***Phantom-Phurball!*** We should see many, many nice models as this freedom allows the modeler to build as they see fit, and not conform to a contest theme.

So enjoy these pictures and many more in the Anniston 2009 gallery on the website!



Anniston 2009



The “Lost” Art of Sprue Stretching by Will Self

In this modern age of modeling putty for every occasion you rarely see anyone using stretched sprue anymore. I confess that I too am a fan of the putty. But there are times and circumstances that being able to stretch a little sprue may be more advantageous than going for the jar or tube of putty, not to mention cost effective. Why use up some expensive putty when you can use plastic that you have already paid for once??? Hopefully this article will remind folks of how easy it is to use this technique, and show those that may be new to the hobby some of the “old school” techniques that, in my opinion, still have a place on the workbench.

Step 1: Necessary Equipment

Well you’re obviously going to need some sprue from a kit. I prefer a straight smooth piece that is a couple of inches long. The reason for the length will become apparent shortly. Now you need a heat source of some kind, I have stretched sprue using everything from a kitchen match to a light bulb, but I have

found that these small “tea light” candles work the best. (pic #1) They are flat bottomed and will sit on the bench and are low profile so you don’t have to worry about knocking them over while lit, and best of all they are cheap, I bought a pack of ten at a craft store for .99 cents. The main reason I prefer candles is they generate an excellent amount of heat, and in a small vertical column, unlike say a light bulb or hair dry, which has a wider column of heat and requires a longer piece of sprue to keep from burning your fingers!!!! That’s pretty much it for the equipment...now for the fun part!!!!



a piece of sprue. (pic #2)

Step 2: Melting Plastic!!!

In a nutshell that is all stretching sprue really is. You are using a heat source to heat the plastic up to the point that it becomes very pliable, I have found that there is a semi-fine line between pliable and puddle!!! I takes a little practice but once you get the hang of it it’s a snap. You begin by selecting



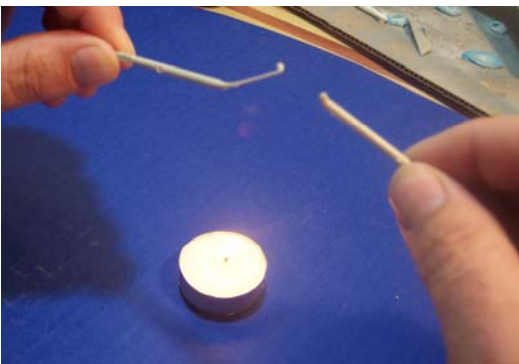
Light the candle and let the flame stabilize, then holding the ends of the sprue between the thumb and fore finger of each hand hold the middle of the sprue over the flame, this is where the art part comes in. The thickness of the sprue you are stretching will determine how high above the flame to hold, the thicker the

sprue the closer to the flame. You should never have to touch the sprue to the flame; it will actually catch on fire. I usually start off around a quarter of an inch above the flame. (pic#3)

Once you have the sprue in position, very gently start pulling the ends of the sprue away from each other, at first you just need to hold a gentle pressure until you feel the sprue start moving, then you can move quicker. (pic#4) Once I get the sprue stretching, I usually start raising it slightly more above the flame to help it



cool and keep it from going to that puddle stage!!!! Now if you don't move it quick enough or hold it too close to the flame then you can get a mess!



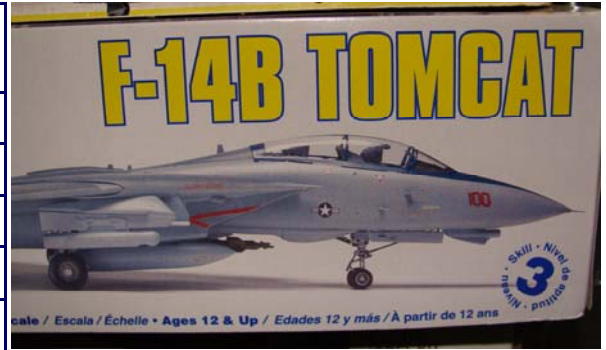
You can stretch it to any diameter that you need, length will just depend on you, the more you do it, the better you get and you'll be surprised what you can do with stretched sprue. The one thing to remember is that it takes a little practice (pic#5). The uses are limited to your

imagination and ingenuity, but the two most common uses I have found is a seam or gap filler, radio aerials for aircraft and armor. I have included some images of a 1/48th Hasegawa F-18E that I used this technique to fill some of the gaps...just stretch some sprue, glue in place and a little wet sanding and your good to go.



Revell 1/48 F-14B Updated Kit

Kit:	Grumman F-14B
Scale:	1/48
Kit #	85-5527
Manufacturer:	Revell-Monogram
Price:	\$26.99
Decals:	2 options
Reviewer:	Will Nichols
Notes:	Updated Classic Kit



Much has been written about the history of the Grumman F-14 Tomcat family, and the Revell-Monogram family of

Tomcat kits, so I will dispense with the plane history & kit background, and focus this article on the updates to the venerable Monogram kit.

Updates:

Monogram has added sixty-seven new parts to their F-14A/D kit to attempt to bring it to B model standards. Included among these are:

- GBU-12 LGBs
- GBU-31 JDAM's
- TARPS recon pod
- Mk.82 500lb 'Dumb' Bombs
- LANTIRN Targeting pod and pylon adapter
- Crew figures
- Late style Tomcat wheels
- Various antennae, lumps, & bumps



Photo from www.revell.com

The Monogram Tomcat is a venerable classic kit, but it was not quite up to modern Tomcat configuration (well, modern before they became beer cans and razor blades...). This new release addresses that nicely. Included is the Sparrowhawk HUD used by the F-14B, but the kit lacks the square PTIDS screen found in the rear cockpit of F-14Bs.

Still, a value for the price, seeing as 3-4 of these kits can be bought for one Hasegawa kit. A little TLC during construction, and you have a very nice looking Tomcat. Recommended.

Dr. Phil: Painting Natural Metal by Phil Hale



I wanted to go over the process again for using Floquil Bright Silver for natural metal. Prepare the model for painting as you normally would. If you have had some rough sanding your next step might be to prime the entire model with Tamiya Flat Black.

Let that dry for a couple of hours or so and then spray it the model with Tamiya Gloss Black. I use Metalizer thinner to thin both blacks and the Bright Silver. You want about 20 to 30% paint to thinner especially on the Gloss Black and the Bright Silver. When the flat black is dry when spray on the gloss black and continue to spray until everything is completely gloss. It is important to get a good coat of gloss. This will be the basis for your silver. The Tamiya Gloss Black will be super thin and it'll take several coats to get the model

glossy. It will not build up and fill in the panel lines. Now this needs to dry for at least two to four hours. It would be good if you could let it dry over night. Once this is dry, it'll be silver time.

Thin the Bright Silver with Metalizer Thinner and again you want 20-30% paint to 70-80% thinner. Spray light coats until everything is covered. It won't take too long as Bright Silver covers quickly. Bright Silver will dry quickly and within an hour you'll be able to handle it and mask over it if you like. You could tint the various panels with pastels as I have begun to do. You can also tint panels with Sakura Pigma Micron pens or Faber-Castell Pitt artist pens. Sakura pens are available at most Hobby Lobby Stores. They make them in 12 different colors but Hobby Lobby only seems to have black. They range in size from 005 to a micro brush. I believe Faber-Castell has a set of six pens/brush points in various shades of gray available at Hobby Lobby.

Sakura has a website but you should be able to order these pens from any good art supply store. The Sakura black pen 005 tip will fit into the panel lines in most 1/48 scale models. The smallest tip that Faber Castell makes is 01 but you can trim it slightly to fit into the panel lines. Faber Castell makes these pens in a host of colors. They make a dark burnt umber color that is perfect for panel lines. The black from Sakura is not as opaque and you can remove some of it with a dry Q-tip. A damp Q-tip will remove it all. I have used a Blue Sakura brush pen to shade burn panels on an test bed simulating those of an F-100 burn area near the afterburner.

You can use the pen to make a few marks on the panel and then take a dry Q-tip to blend it into the metal. If you've done too much, you can dampen the Q-tip and take it all off. You'll need to over coat the tinted area with Metalizer thinner as it can be fragile. These pens are great for oil/fuel/hydraulic streaking. Put a little blob of ink on a panel line and then use a Q-tip to pull the ink along the air flow. If you choose to use the pastels, just scrub them straight into the Bright Silver. You can mask off the panels if you like but it is not absolutely necessary. Scrub the pastels into the silver, blow off the excess and then take a Q-tip or soft cloth and buff them into the silver. If you get a little into area that you don't want shaded, take a damp Q-tip and remove it before you buff it in. No, I don't have stock in Q-tips. I wish that I did sometimes.

Region Three Update by Phil Hale

First up, Congratulations to the Georgia Mountain Modelers for winning Region Three Chapter of the Year. These boys are serious about the hobby, promoting IPMS and being a shining light in their community. I am so proud to be associated with them but at the same time I am a little embarrassed (coming from the Latin word bare assed) at the complacency of the rest of the region. I know there are more clubs doing stuff for the community but I can't nominate anyone without a justification. So get off your em-bare-asses and write something up, then send it to me. So simple a modeler could do it!

Keep using your Chapter Fact Sheets as a working document to let your guys know when they need to renew their IPMS membership. You only need five current members at the time of renewal (Oct 1) to get the job done. You can always update the document such as change of officers, new members, etc. Also remember, all of your club officers must be IPMS members. Think of it this way, it is a small price to pay for liability insurance. Check around if you want, liability insurance "ain't cheap and there is no way you can get insurance for \$20.00 dollars a year. With our "sue happy" nation, you need insurance. 'Nuff said

We have had some very successful show this year and with gas prices down to reasonable levels, I would encourage you to travel and support the upcoming shows. Knoxville, Birmingham and Mobile had great shows but the turnout was lower than I expected. Get out and support our region, support these shows. I can assure you that if you don't support others then they won't support your show. While I'm on a roll here, I've gotta tell you that I was really disappointed in the aircraft turnout at Knoxville. There were less than 30 models in the aircraft categories and that is a shame because Mike and the boys from Knoxville put on a very good show. Next year, lets see if we can't bump up the aircraft categories for them, eh? Get up, get a bunch of guys together and drive to these shows. If you don't have anything to enter, support the vendors and fellowship with other modelers. I promise it won't kill you and if it does then we'll raid your model stash. You won't need them.

Upcoming Events:

June 20 - IPMS Metro Atlanta Model Expo, IPMS Mairretta, Cobb County Civic Center. Contact my main man James Corley at 770-973-5666 or jdcorley@bellsouth.net Take that "Midnight train to Georgia" Ya'll.

Oct 4 - Huntsville Annual Contest - Huntsville Plastic Modeler Society More info later on this one. Contact Rocket Man David Lanteigne at davelant@hiwaay.net. Contact "Ground Control To Major Tom".

Oct 24 - Museum of Aviation 25th Anniversary IPMS Model Show, Robins AFB Museum of Aviation, Robins AFB, Georgia. Contact the honorable Fred Horkey at 478-953-8366 or revette4@cox.net. Don't let "that's the night that the lights went out in Georgia", ya hear.

Nov 7 - IMPS Middle Tennessee Annual Contest and Dawg Show, Lane Agri Center/Rutherford County Ag Center. Contact the lovely and talented Novus Henry at 915-478-2305 ornhenryjr@bellsouth.net. "Them Nashville cats play wild mountain music" ya dig.

Nov 14 - ACME NNL Southern Nationals, Smyrna Community Center. Contact the intrepid Bob Downie atgrdeyed@comcast.net. Keep "Georgia on my mind" crazy, man crazy.

Building the Tamiya F-16C Part 1 in 1/48 by Will Nichols

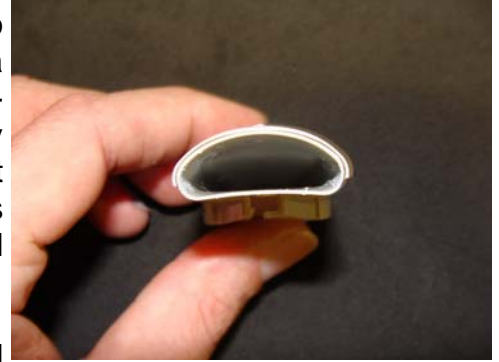
First, the main intake. Tamiya splits the intake into forward and aft halves, to accommodate the fact both NSI (small mouth) and MCID (large mouth) intakes. The Forward end is different in different kits. Blocks 25, 32, 42, & 52 all have the small mouth intake. Blocks 30, 40, & 50 have the large mouth. The difference is this: The NSI was originally mated to the Pratt & Whitney engine. Starting w/ Block 30, the GE engine became available, and they found the GE engine needed more air, so the MCID intake was developed. Blocks ending in 0 have the GE engine, whilst blocks ending in 2 (after Block 30 and all before) have the NSI intake.

I filled the seam w/ Tamiya putty and sanded it out. Then I sprayed the intake a mix of Tamiya gloss white tinted with Tamiya sand to replicate that creamy color active Viper intakes get in the field. The fan face was first sprayed Tamiya gloss black, then Alclad highly polished aluminum. That's brighter than the part is in real life, but artistically it allows for the fan face to be seen at the back of the dark intake tube.



F-16 Construction Continued...

Next up in the forward intake half, attached to the intake fuselage parts. This piece is a mulligan. I had originally used a resin forward intake from the Taiwanese company called Dangerous. It is a lovely piece, it just didn't fit worth a hoot! So I robbed the parts from another kit, and went back to work. I'll have this sanded out and painted soon.



Up next is the Aires nose wheel well. I used



the Aires wheel bay set, and have a few words about it (some are not repeatable in polite company either!). The main well is mated to the top half of the rear intake tube. It fit superbly. This nose piece however, not quite so. I had to sand the intake tube bottom, and Dremel tool the resin piece paper thin on the bottom, then grease it up like a sumo wrestler in a Speedo to get the thing to fit! Looks killer, typical Aires detail, but lousy fit. It was the source of much con-

sternation, the occasional foul word from our Anglo/Saxon heritage, and so on and so forth.

Now to the cockpit. I added the G-suit hook up from a Hasegawa O2 mask hose, and a few other little bits from scratch. Base color is Mr. Color neutral gray, whilst the consoles are a TLAR (That Looks About Right) blend of Tamiya Nato Black, flat black, and a drop of gloss black for improved flow. Details thus far have



been



picked out in Vallejo light gray. Also, the worn areas in front of the rudder pedals were first air-brushed Tamiya yellow green, then hit with various color pencils, artists pens, and paints to achieve the scuffed look. Next up came picking out the switches and knobs with various colors. Now, there is more yellow and red on this part than in real life, but

a little artistic license calls for this. A true to life military cockpit is too bland, and visually uninteresting. To be continued Next Issue.

Pictures from the Knoxville Show, 3/28/3009

The following pictures are from the Knoxville, TN show on March 28, 2009.



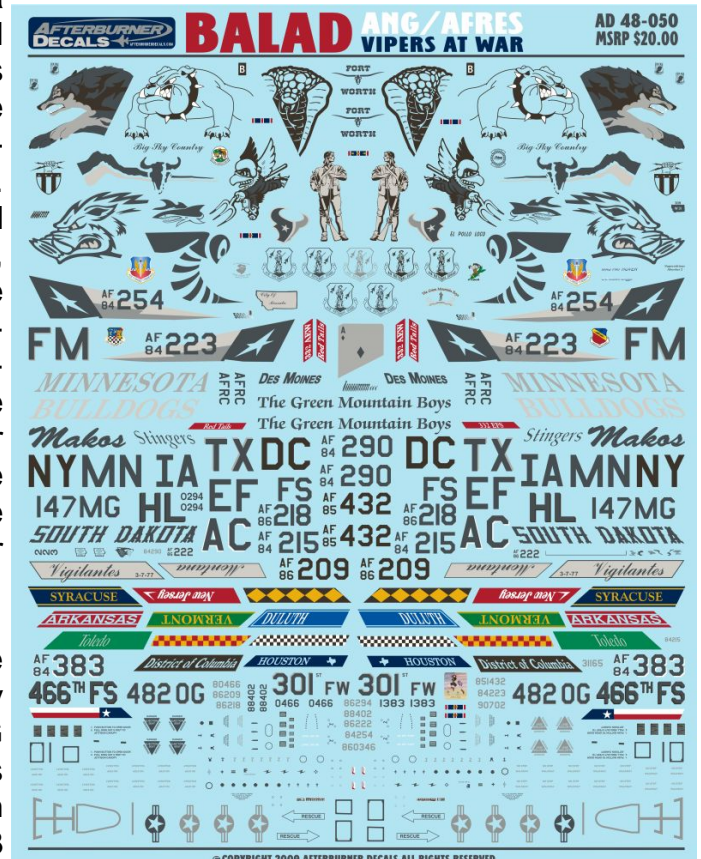
Balad ANG/AFRES Vipers at War by Afterburner Decals

Anyhoo, it covers a whole bunch of Guard and Reserve units and their vipers that have deployed to Balad AB, Iraq for duty in OIF. The media quit talking about OIF when there wasn't a politician to hit over the head about it, but there are still tens of thousands of service people in Iraq doing the work and taking it to our enemies every day. Vipers still launch out of Balad and put ordnance on targets, and this sheet pays just a little tribute to their efforts and sacrifices. In essence, this little company was founded because Scott couldn't get any other companies interested in the units deployed to Iraq after the opening phase of OIF. Wonder what they think now?

Since the opening phase of the war, the brunt of the in-country air war has been borne by ANG and AFRES squadrons. This sheet covers 15 units in both the ANG and AFRES with 3 units receiving coverage from different eras, PLUS the newest markings for both Iowa and Duluth. The sheet covers all eras of operations from the very beginning in May 2004 to just a couple of months ago. It also includes some significant airframes, like Vermont's all time high hour viper "Lethal lady".....the first F-16 to 7,000 hours, and the jet Lt. Col. Mike Brill used to become the all-time high hour flier in F-16s, surpassing the 7,000 hour mark.

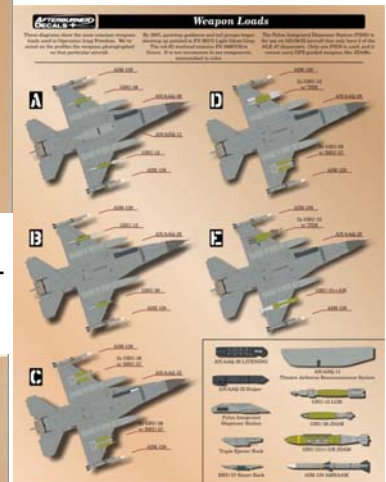
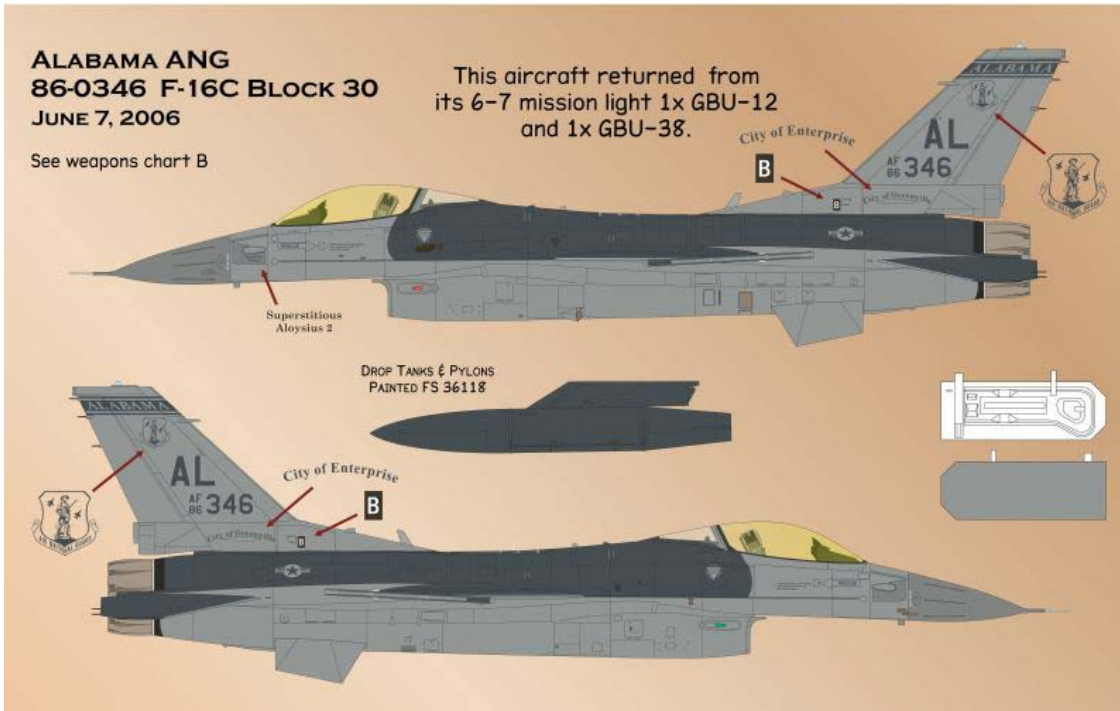
The 332nd EAW, the "Red Tails" of Tuskegee fame is the unit under which all F-16 operations at Balad are organized, and this tradition was carried on by having the jets deployed under the 332nd banner carry the "Red Tails" flash on their tails, and these jets from Montana, Houston, Ft. Smith and Duluth are included.

If you are a fan of the guard, reserves, F-16s or combat jets....you'll enjoy this release. If you are into all 3....you'll be thrilled!



Balad Viper Comments by Will Nichols

Here are two of the incredible profiles provided by Afterburner in the sheet. Shown are examples from Alabama and Arkansas. Five different weapon charts are also included, along with comprehensive notes detailing the differences between the vari-



ous blocks of F-16C (Blocks 25-42 are covered by this sheet). I can highly recommend this decals sheet. Get it fast from www.afterburnerdecals.com before its gone!



The weapons chart is incredible!

IPMS Phantom Phlashers

Birmingham, AL

*The Phantom
Phocus*

www.phantomplashers.org

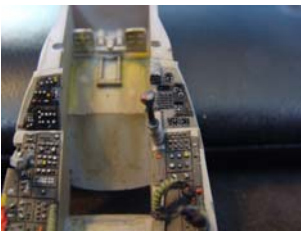


Inside this issue:

- *Model Reviews!*
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A Message from the Editor

Next Month:



Well, I know its about-damn-time I got this thing together! Better late than never.

Yet another Phantom Phocus goes to bed, and once again it is chocked full of modeling goodness. Decals, two contests covered, kits being built & previewed—not bad.

I would like to say a special thank you to my

good friend Will Self of Eldorado, Texas for his how-to on stretching sprue. It is much appreciated, and an expanded version is coming to the websites 'How-to' section with more pictures.

If you would like to see your name on the website, or in the Phocus, please, please, please write me something. Anything. It doesn't

matter! Or I'll get Paint Chipley to dance naked at your house!

And for those astute readers, the 3rd please was intentionally misspelled. Can anyone tell me what TV show that came from?

See y'all next time!

William R. Nichols Jr.

Propaganda Pasher, IPMS

Phantom Phlashers