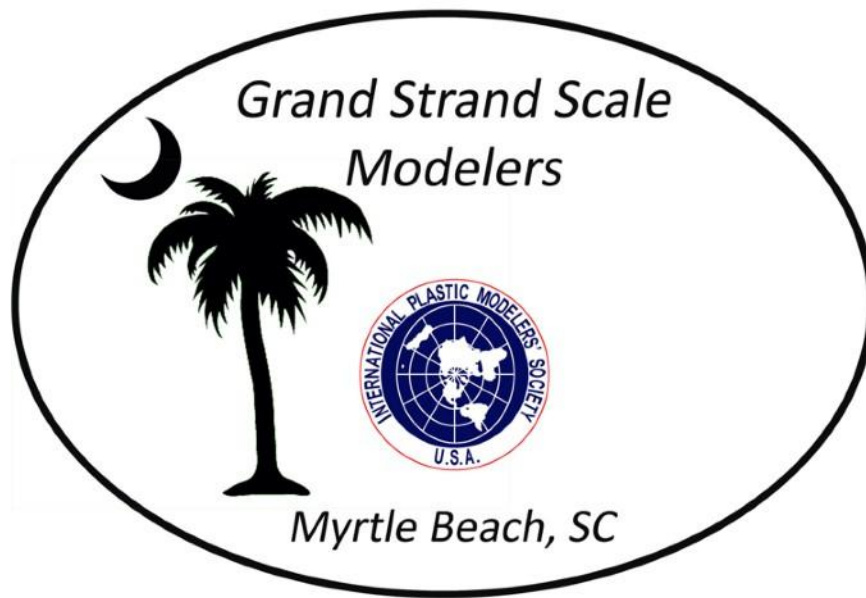




A Grand Strand Scale Modelers Publication
Since 2018
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Next Meeting is
10.30am - Saturday – 15 August 2026
At
Horry County Memorial Library – Socastee
141 707 Connector, Myrtle Beach, SC 29588
[Google Maps](#)

Meeting Minutes for July 25th 2026

Grand Strand Scale Modelers

July's meeting was held at the Socastee County Library starting at 10.30am, July 25th 2026.

There were 13 members in attendance.

July 25th meeting agenda:

1. **President / Vice President welcome (5 Minutes)**
2. **Club Treasurer Update (5 Minutes)**
3. **Member items, updates from Havelock show etc (15 Minutes)**
4. **Beachcon 2027 - Permanent agenda item (30 Minutes)**
5. **Demo - Making Happy Trees with Andrew (we don't make mistakes, we make happy accidents) . (30 Minutes)**
6. **Show and Tell - ~ 5 minute allotment per person (75 Minutes)**
7. **Monthly Club Raffle (5 Minutes)**
8. **Any other business (5 Minutes)**

- **Welcome/items.** 13 Members joined our meeting today, get well soon to Herb, we hope to see him back soon. Good to see MG back and we hope to have Chaz, Chad and Gabe also back soon! Many thanks to Earl for getting our tee-shirts and hats, very snazzy indeed, ya'll be looking drippy.
- **Club Treasurer Update:** Current balance is **\$3279.22**. General Robert Reed center paid now for the 1st installment of the beachcon dues. Thanks Phil. Also initial reach out completed to the table rental company by Phil for rental of approx. 50 tables. Additional payouts recently for renewal of the GSSM website and domain. \$248.17 total for those fees.
- **Member Items:** Some of our members made the trip to Havelock where we had several winners in different categories. Well done to the winners, by all reports the show was very good and enjoyed by our attendees.
- **BeachCon 2027 task assignment:** The agreed upon theme, **'Freedom 250 and Beyond'** artwork and poster was completed by Mike, very eye catching poster, thanks Mike! Ask for members to start campaigning with local business and business owners if they would be willing to sponsor a category or categories for our 2027 show. Prices are as follows:
 - Category winner: \$30,
 - Best of Class: \$40,
 - Best of Show: \$50.
 - Cash or check can be made payable to 'Grand Strand Scale Modelers' and sent to Phil Cavender (his details are present on the [2027 flyer](#).)
- **Demo:** Trees/Tree making by Andrew R. Thanks Andrew for a well presented and detailed description of tree making and the tools and materials of the trade, I can say I certainly learned a lot of very useful tips and techniques. Please find included, in the bottom of the newsletter, Andrew's detailed documentation on the basic construction and materials for use. Pages 8-10.



- **Show and Tell** has been posted to the [facebook group](#). Pictures have also been uploaded to [DropBox](#) for those who do not have facebook access. Lots of talent on the tables today, great job everyone, we know this is the reason most of us attend these meetings, to show what we've built and see what everyone else has built, learn from one another and exchange successes and failures. Please keep up the good work and keep bringing in your latest and greatest to share with the group, we all learn a little every time in this hobby and I am inspired each month by the models shared by the group members. This month we had 21 individual models brought in by 11 members. Phil started us off with his 1/16 scale Jeep in a crate, superbly executed, a real winner that he did a fantastic job on. Next Dayne brought in the Mobile Suit Gouf Gunpla and Bandai Rick Dom MG 1/100 scale models. Excellent work as always! John had on display his recent winning Monster Energy Nascar and his latest wingy thingy, the ME163 Komet. Looking good with some excellent camo work. Scott V pumped up the scale with a 1/16 Das Werk Panzer III in Dunkelgrau complete with Classy Hobby commander figure, beautiful and detailed finished model. Mike stayed on the Israeli theme with a pair of 72nd scale examples, the IAF KFIR and the IDF Merkava, both finished to Mike's expert standard! Lou was operating in microscale also with 2 Bren gun carriers in 48th scale and a nice miniature of a WWII Luftwaffe pilot in flight gear with a nice textured base. Super work. Josh introduced us to his completed F6F, beautifully done and finished. His Avenger is in progress. Jordan is working diligently on the Italeri B-57 Night Hawk. Coming along very nicely. Jason had 3 offerings this week, 2 in progress and 1 complete, the 1/72 scale Leopard 1 from Academy was a recent IPMS review, the Takom Superblitz Jagdpanther in 35th scale was a nice simple build which was going together well, and the last offering was the Dragon 1/35 scale Jagdtiger. Those in process should be ready for the next meeting! Rick brought along his latest Wingnut Wings successes, the Sopwith Camel and the Fokker Eindecker, beautiful models expertly finished, super job Rick. And last but not least, Andrew had two offerings, one complete, one in process; the 1/48 scale Russian BA-64B beautifully finished and sitting atop one of Phil's resin bases! And, a project Andrew is working on a conversion of the 1955 Chevy Bel Air, really looking forward to seeing how this one turns out! Grat job all, keep up the fantastic work.
- *As usual - All members are always encouraged to post their work regularly on the GSSM facebook page as well as other groups you may be members of. Get your work out there, it deserves to be seen.*
- **Monthly Club Raffle:** Thanks to all who purchased some tickets and congratulations to the winners.

New & Ongoing Business:

GSSM Scheduling: (Note....ALL dates are subject to change due to events or library availability.)

Jul 2026	Andrew Raisis	Grow Them Trees!	Andrew has agreed to show us all how he makes those fascinating diorama trees.
Oct 2026	Jason Boggans	Inventory Cataloging	Never buy the same kit again (well, unless the price is just TOOOO good to miss) Scalemates and it's uses.
2026	Scott Murphy	TrackLinks	Dirty those treads! A must for the armor nuts out there.
2026	Mike Fleckenstein/Joe Baxter	Canopy Polishing & Vacuforming	Mike will polish his bits for us and show us how to create our own vacuformed marvels
2026	Some brave soul	Water Effects	Water water everywhere, but its resin so don't drink it 🙄



We ARE looking for demonstrations for 2026!!

Canopy Polishing	Best methods and how to!! You can polish the floors too....
Masking Techniques	Tape, masking fluid, other mediums, and techniques
Weathering	Too general so we would break it up into specific demos.
Vacuum Forming Items	Especially canopies....
Using YouTube for Modeling	Techniques, Tips, & Research. If you're not using it....you SHOULD!
Using Foam Board	Ah, so THAT's why Lowes & Home Depot have that stuff..... Using a good foam cutter .

Upcoming Contest & Events

Events Calendar 2026/2027 (Regions 2, 3, 11, 12)		
Date	Show	Region / State
August 22 nd 2026	Virginia Shootout	2 / Virginia
August 22 nd 2026	49th Annual HPMS Show	3 / Alabama
August 22 nd 2026	Flight 19 Modelfest	11 / Florida
September 12 th 2026	PennCon 2026	2 / Pennsylvania
September 12 th 2026	Blue Angel Modelfest	3 / Florida
September 19 th 2026	Head for the Highlands	3 / Tennessee
September 19 th 2026	Fayetteville Swap Meet	12 / North Carolina
September 26 th 2026	Fall Con 26	12 / North Carolina
October 3 rd 2026	Maraudercon 2026	2 / Maryland
October 9 th 2026	Modelpalooza	11 / Florida
November 7 th 2026	Ravencon 2026	2 / Virginia
November 14 th 2026	Middle Tennessee Modelcon	3 / Tennessee
February 27 th 2027	Old Dominion Open	2 / Virginia
March 6 th 2027	Pelicon 2027	11 / Florida
March 13 th 2027	Beachcon 2027	12 / South Carolina
April 2 nd 2027	Chattanooga Modelcon 2027	3 / Tennessee
April 3 rd 2027	Mosquitocon 2027	2 / New Jersey
April 24 th 2027	IPMS Phantom Phlashers	3 / Alabama
April 24 th 2027	Model Expo 2027	11 / Florida

Contest Sites (As always....if you find any broken links, or have one to suggest, please let the VP know!!)

IPMS USA Events & Contests	Event Calendar
AMPS (Armor Modeling & Preservation Society)	Events accessible via AMPS Main Page
Model Cars Magazine Forum	Contests & Shows
Cybermodeler Online	Scale Modeling Event Calendar

Scale Modeler Resources / Sites

Scalemates	https://www.scalemates.com/	Stash management, reviews, genealogy, instructions
IPMS Website	https://ipmsusa.org/	Members Info, events
You Tube	https://www.youtube.com/	Source for how to's, build videos, tutorials and more
FineScale Modeler	https://forum.finescale.com/	Useful forum full of hints and tips and a large audience to answer questions
Scale Model Addict	https://www.scalemodeladdict.com/	Tips, guides tool and tech.

Making Trees For Your Diorama

Properly executed. A tree can have a large impact on your diorama, adding realism as well as creating an area of focus and interest.

- Thought there's other methods out there, these are the ways that I like to use to create my trees and shrubs:

There are 2 basic parts: the armature, or the trunk and branches, and the foliage, or leaves.

For the armature, the most widely used method is the wire armature, which is twisting a bunch of wires to create the shape, however, for realism and ease of build, I will use a natural armature, which is dried out branches taken from nature.

- I typically harvest dead branches of creeping juniper from our flower beds around the house and store them until needed. They have a bark and twisted gnarly look much like a miniature tree.
- Using a natural armature has the advantage of essentially being “ready-made”. The shape, texture and basic color is natural, so it’s less labor intensive than other options.... best of all, it's free.
- **The disadvantages** are that, being dry, they are brittle and a branch can break away, although it can usually be super glued back in place
- The other issue is, the shape is static so there are some limitations in the shape of your tree. I will often glue two branches together to reshape or create a fuller armature.
- **Moving on to the wire method**, which involves bundling and twisting a group of wires to the desired shape, trimming the wire branches, then covering this wire “skeleton” with a “skin, or bark” of some sort of filler, then painting the armature to achieve the natural color effect.
- With a wire armature, I typically use floral wire. It’s cheap, comes in straight pre-cut lengths, and easily shaped. I’ve also used a length of stranded wire for smaller armatures as well.
- With this wire method, you can be more creative with shaping, and reshaping. You also have the option of adding a root system at the base for added effect.
- When the wire armature, and foliage base is set, it all gets sprayed in a black base, then the colors that most effectively replicate bark, which is typically all brown/ grey tone, with dry brushing of lighter greys. Real tree trunks are not all brown (Just take a few pictures of trees and you’ll see what I mean).

- If you dug out a scar or open knot in the trunk, you can also use light tans to show the exposed meat of the tree.
- . A dark wash is also an option to pull out all the detail you put into the bark.
- **The disadvantages**

First, besides cost of materials, it is more labor intensive, as you need to cover the wire with a filler: either clay, sculpt a mold, Tamiya putty, sheetrock mud or hot glue, prior to painting and adding foliage.

I prefer hot glue for my trees, because the glue is cheap, easy to apply and create texture, plus unlike the other materials mentioned, remains flexible so you can shape and reshape the tree and branches, even after application.

Bottom line... this process is the longer of my two methods and can avoided if you use a natural armature.

On to adding foliage.

- After creating the armature, either wire or natural, in order to create the finer branches and add volume, I use a product called Seafoam, which I superglue to the armature branches wetted in CA accelerator. this way the seafoam is fixed in place immediately. Seafoam is a dried plant that , in itself, looks like a tiny tree or shrub, and it's available online. (Samples)
- Another option is using poly fiber to cover the wire, though I find it is better suited for scales smaller than 1/48, or for shrubs.
- With both amature methods the foliage process is the same: spray the foliage area with watered down PVA, or hairspray, dip the sprayed areas in a tray containing static grass or clump foliage in the color of choice, shake off the excess into the tray, so you can recycle the unused material. Repeat this process until the desired effect is achieved. At this point, check and brush off any place where excess static grass shouldn't be, like on the trunk or heavier branches.
- If you want to add fruit, like apples or lemons, a quick cheat it to find beads in the appropriate scale(found in the craft jewelery section at Hobby Lobby) , or make them from air dry clay, then paint and apply randomly with PVA glue.

Now you have a tree for your diorama.

Basic Materials list

Wire

Dead shrubs

Hot glue, air dry clay, Tamiya putty, sheetrock mud, or sculpt-a-mold

Seafoam (optional)

Poly fiber (optional)

Static grass (short) or clump foliage

CA glue & accelerator

Hairspray or watered down PVA

Black primer

Paints (browns, greys, light tan (for knots) green (lichen)

Dark wash (optional)

Tool list

Wood or foam block with hole to serve as a manufacturing base

Wire cutter

Needle nose pliers

Tweezers

Toothpicks

Hot glue gun

Airbrush & brushes

Deep tray for flocking

Small China brush and or toothbrush

Paper towels (for cleanup)