



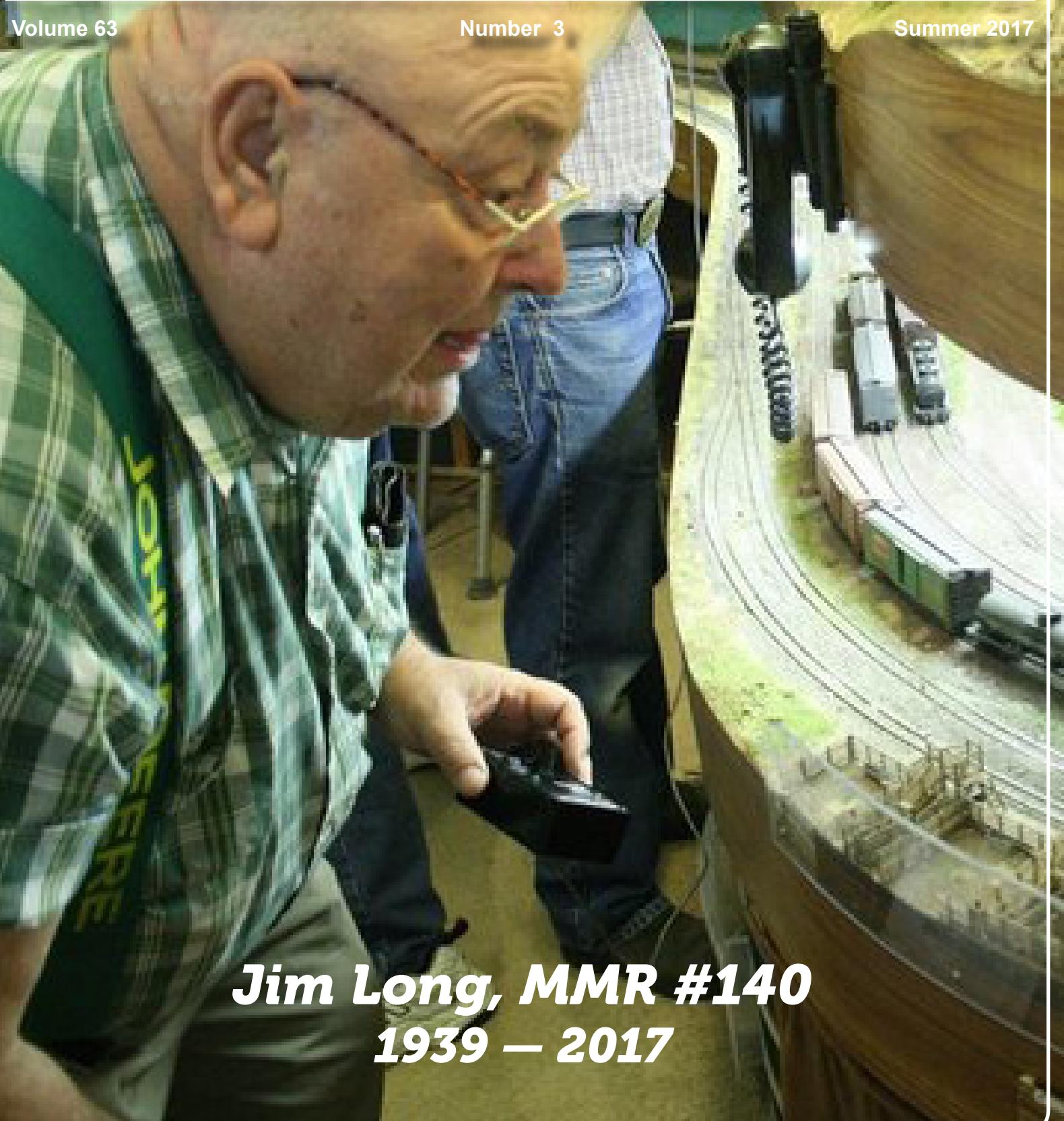
The Marker Lamp



Volume 63

Number 3

Summer 2017



Jim Long, MMR #140
1939 – 2017

Lone Star Region Call Board

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The Marker Lamp

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The editorial policy of The Marker Lamp, the official publication of The Lone Star Region, shall be to contribute, wherever possible, to the promotion, growth and understanding of the hobby of Model Railroading, within the confines of good taste and responsibility. The Marker Lamp is published once each quarter by and for the members of The Lone Star Region of The National Model Railroad Association. Articles appearing in The Marker Lamp are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of the officers or membership of The Lone Star Region or The National Model Railroad Association.

Address all correspondence, news, photos and drawings to the editor. All material will be gladly accepted and will be used depending on the availability of space and suitability of material. None will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided. Correspondence relating to Pike Ads and Dealer Ads should be addressed to Speed Muller gertmul@gmail.com

Cover photo
by Steve Sandifer

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LSR Division Directors

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Operating pieces

by Riley Triggs
rileytriggs@gmail.com
ponyrr.blogspot.com
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My brakemen for a recent op session on the Cat Mountain & Santa Fe

Operations are becoming more a part of mainstream modeling each day. I see people developing operating schemes that are different than they were 5, 10 and 20 years ago. Today, the elements have changed from maximum trackage, maximum amount of trains crammed into a session with meets and locals that are constantly getting interrupted, and yards that are jammed packed like a sliding block puzzle - all elements that generate stress that is a turn off to most railroaders. It seemed layout owners wanted to have a difficult operating session.

Today, the idea has completely changed to be more about providing a realistic, low-stress environment where you can actually enjoy the process of operating. The elements are slow realistic movements, a slow or real time fast clock, and quality of experience over quantity. This creates a much more

approachable environment for all skill levels and there are more people starting to dabble in this aspect of the hobby as a consequence.

My own operating experiences have run this same gamut over the past 30 years. My first op session ever was on David Barrow's original *Cat Mountain & Santa Fe*, and I was completely overwhelmed by the entire experience. Not only was it the largest layout I'd ever seen, but it seemed there were trains going every direction at once, and at one point, I think there was even a hidden MOP train that I was supposed to pick up from a hole in the wall?! Imagine the confusion (and stress) I had as a rookie. But with some patient guidance by the experienced crew, I overcame the steep learning curve enough to enjoy, rather than fear the next time I was invited to an operating session, but there was a definite threshold to



Riley and Rick De Candido are the hostlers this day on Rick's Fillmore Avenue Roundhouse layout (photo by Rick De Candido)

overcome.

Fast forward to monthly operating sessions on the latest *CM&SF* iteration, and you'll find David's layout is much more straightforward, prototypical, and focused than his first. It's not about speed and quantity of trains, it's about simulating a very specific time in the Lubbock area on the Santa Fe and moving trains deliberately and prototypically. Sessions are low stress and even more satisfying as a result, and the learning curve is much less steep.

The most recent layout I operated on is Rick De Candido's *Fillmore Avenue Roundhouse* in which he simulates steam locomotive and passenger car servicing - and that is it! The two of us operated for over 3 hours and didn't break a sweat, but we were completely enthralled and engaged in the details of blowing horns, lining up coal shoots, and mainly

just moving locomotives between inspection, washing, the roundhouse and the ready tracks. It was thoroughly enjoyable mostly because the focus was so clear and the work was manageable and realistic, so there was no stress from not understanding what was going on or being confronted with constant irregularities and annoyances. It was simply about being a regular day on the railroad. Did I mention his layout is only 12' long?

So, if you are not an operator currently, you should look again at these new generation of layouts like David's and Rick's that are not intimidating and don't have "gotchas" or steep thresholds for visitors or newbies.

I go in depth about Rick's layout later in this issue. And all I can think about is the enjoyment I had, so I can't wait to go back!

Riley

Up the Tracks

By Bill Dryden
NMRA & LSR Life Member



Here are upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware.

I will provide all the information YOU send me and that I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the NMRA Scale Rails and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me via e-mail at bdr149@airmail.net.

Lone Star Region 67th Annual Convention 2018

June 13-17 2018 Austin, TX
Come all!!
PARTICIPATE!!!

RECURRING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

LSR Division 3 - Northeast Texas Division – Allen

The Trinity River Division meets on the Second Saturday of every month at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Allen. Occasionally the day or branch changes due to scheduling conflicts so pay close attention to the e-mail meeting notices that go out a week before the meeting.

If you would like to be added to the e-mail list contact Jerry Hoverson
At JKHoverson@gmail.com.

LSR Division 4 – Cen-Tex Division – Austin

The Cen-Tex Division meets bi-monthly at the Austin Northwest Recreational Center, 2913 Northland Drive, Austin, TX. Meetings are held at 10:00 am on the Second Saturday of the *odd* months and include clinics, show-and-tell, DCC minute, social activities and a layout open house. For more information about upcoming meetings, see <http://centexnmra.org> or contact director@centexnmra.org to be added to the mail list.

Alamo Model Railroad Engineers - San Antonio

The Alamo Model Railroad Engineers meets the 2nd Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Zucht Building at the Texas Transportation Museum, 11791 Wetmore Rd., San Antonio TX. For more information call Peter Shavney (210) 317-3661 or Gene Turner (210) 355-2777; or visit the web site www.alamomodelrailroadengineers.com.

Houston Area Live Steamers

HALS has over 9,000 feet of track for you to enjoy and ride on most any Saturday of the year. Someone is usually there every Saturday with special run, operations, waybills/timetable, work and fun run days scheduled throughout the year. Our public run days are the third Saturday of the month March through November. Come see our 2,500 foot expansion in Phase 4. Model Railroaders (any scale) are welcome to attend most any time. Check our web site out at www.hals.org for schedule of events or e-mail Rick White – rick.white.jr@gmail.com for more information.

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs – Irving

The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Visit the website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site or member clubs.

New Braunfels Railroad Museum

Kids Fun Day is held on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. New Braunfels Railroad Museum, 302 South San Antonio Street, in the 1907 Restored Railroad Depot; New Braunfels, TX. Museum phone (830) 627-2447. Kids of all ages will have the opportunity to run model trains and become a Jr. Engineer. Also among the displays at the Kids Fun Day will be a large US Army Model Garden (G) Scale and Lego Trains. Visit our Steam Engine, Caboose, Dining Car (available for Birthday Parties) and Box Car. There will be other fun, train related activities, additional model trains, train artifacts, our 1907 depot are on display. The Railroad Museum opens at 10:00 am on Saturdays. For field trip scheduling and more information, call Howard Young (210) 542-6121, or visit us at www.nbrrm.org.

Texas Western Model Railroad Club – Forest Hills

The Texas Western Model Railroad Club meets for its business meeting every 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM. The Club is located at 6808 Forest Hills Drive, Forest Hills, TX. For more information: (682) 587-2092 or www.twmrc.org or email cdo@twmrc.org.

Texas Northern Model Railroad Club – Plano

The Texas Northern Model Railroad Club business meeting is the 1st Thursday of the month and for regular meetings on Thursday evenings and most Saturdays. If you like to operate, come by on Tuesday nights to check on our progress in setting up operations. Located in Colin Creek Mall, Plano, TX, outside JC Penney's on the lower level. For more information: www.modelrailroadclub.org.

EVENTS AND SHOWS

May – September

May 27th – Sep. 17th Grapevine Rails “Rolling Through Time”. Mon. – Fri. 8 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Sun. Noon to 5:00 p.m. Admission: Free. Grapevine Visitor Information Center, 636 S. Main Street, Grapevine, TX. For more information: <https://www.grapevinetexasusa.com/event/grapevine-rails%3A-rolling-through-time/20356/> or (817) 410-3185.

September

9th TCA - North Texas Chapter Meet & Show. Sat. 10:30 to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$6, Family \$9 Kids under 12 Free. Collin College Central Park Campus, Conference Center, 2200 West University Drive, McKinney, TX.
More information: <http://tca-northtexaschapter.org/>

16th – 17th 35th Annual Temple Train Show. Sat. 10:00 to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$7, \$1 discount for seniors and active duty military and dependents w/ ID, kids under 12 Free with paid adult, Seniors & Active Duty Military Discounts. Frank Mayborn Center, 3303 North 3rd Street, Temple, TX. More information: www.centramod.com

September – October

Sep. 30th – Oct. 1st Fall Plano Train Show (Sponsored by the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs) Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12 Free with Paid Adult Admission, Scouts & Scout Leaders in Uniform, Admission is Free. Plano Centre; 2000 East Spring Creek Parkway; Plano, TX. For more information: www.dfwtrainshows.com.

October

6th – 7th Annual Cotton Belt Railroad Symposium. Admission: TBA. Sam Rayburn Student Center, Texas A&M Student Center, 2600 W Neal St, Commerce, TX. For more information: www.cottonbeltroute.com.

7th – 8th Galveston Railroad Days. Galveston Railroad Museum, 2602 Santa Fe Place, Galveston, TX.
For more information: www.galvestonrrmuseum.com or (409) 765-5700.

20th – 21st Southwest O Scale Meet. Fri. 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fort Worth Academy, 7301 Dutch Branch Road, Fort Worth, TX. More information: <http://www.oscalesw.com>

28th – 29th New Braunfels Railroad Museum’s 9th Annual Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults 14 & Over \$8, Kids 3–13 \$2, Kids Under 3 FREE. New Braunfels Civic Center, 375 South Castell Avenue, New Braunfels, TX. For more information: call Jim Edmondson (830) 629-2071, e-mail: jedmondson@satx.rr.com or web site: www.nbrrm.org

November

10th – 11th East Texas & Gulf Rail Modelers Assoc. – Annual Model Train Exhibit. Fri. Noon – 5:00 p.m., Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission: Free. Port Neches Library, 2025 Merriman Street, Port Neches, TX

11th – 12th Texas Western Model Train Show. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12: Free. Forest Hill Civic Center, 6901 Wichita Street, Forest Hill, TX. More information: www.twmrc.org.

November-January

Nov. 17th – Jan. 17th Ronald McDonald Trains at Northpark Mall. Mon. – Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Sun. 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Adults \$7, Kids 3–12 \$3, Kids under 2 Free, Seniors 65+ \$3. Northpark, Dallas, TX.
More information: <http://www.thetrainsatnorthpark.com>.

(Multiple Date Event)

Nov. 25th; Dec. 9th, 16th & 17th; Jan. 6th Crescent City Model Railroad Club – Open House. 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission donation is: Adults \$7, Children 6–12 \$3.00, Children 5 and under Free. 601 N. Lester Ave, Metairie, LA. More information: call (504) 737-3723, e-mail: crescentcitymodelrrclub@gmail.com or www.ccmrc.com.

December

3rd – 23rd Christmas at the Museum. Tues. – Fri. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Closed Sun. & Mon.). Adults \$5, Seniors \$2, Kids Under 18 \$1, Museum Members Free. 214 N. Fredonia Street, Longview, TX. More information: (903) 753-5840 or <http://gregghistorical.org/>

9th – 10th Great Texas Train Show. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Onsite Adult Admission is \$2.00 (Good for both days) (Admission is free with online coupon, \$2.00 at the door without a coupon). Premier Events Center, Lakeland Plaza, 1165 S Stemmons Fwy, Lewisville, TX. More information: <http://trainshow.com/greattexastrainshow/>

January 2018

20th – 21st Dallas Area Annual Winter Train Show (Sponsored by the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs) Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12 Free with Paid Adult Admission, Scouts & Scout Leaders in Uniform, Admission is Free. Plano Centre; 2000 East Spring Creek Parkway; Plano, TX. For more information: www.dfwtrainshows.com.

February

3rd – 4th The World's Greatest Hobby on Tour. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Adults TBA, Kids 15 and under Free. NRG Park Arena, 1 NRG Park, Houston, TX. For more information: <http://wghshow.com/hou2018/>

17th – 18th Great Texas Train Show. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Onsite Adult Admission is \$2.00, Kids under 11 Free. Premier Events Center, Lakeland Plaza, 1165 S Stemmons Fwy, Lewisville, TX. More information: <http://trainshow.com/greattexastrainshow/>

24th – 25th SAMRA 42nd Annual Jamboree & Train Show. Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$7, under 16 Free (limit 3) with paid adult admission. Garden Ridge Community Center, 9500 Municipal Parkway, Garden Ridge, TX. For more information: <http://www.samratx.org/shows.html>.

March

17th – 18th Cotton Belt Historical Society, Tyler TAP Chapter Annual Train Show. Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$7, under 12 Free. East Texas Fairgrounds, Harvey Convention Center, 2000 West Front Street, Tyler, TX. More information: <http://trainshow.com/greattexastrainshow/>

April

7th TW TrainWorx 5th Annual Layout Festival. Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. \$10.00 Single, \$20.00 Family (Proceeds benefitting Ronald McDonald House of Dallas) 2808 McGowan St., Dallas, TX. More information: (214) 634-2965 or (877) 881-4997 or <http://www.twtrainworx.com>

5th – 7th 33rd Annual Sn3 Symposium. Contest, clinics, layouts and some of your favorite Narrow Gauge manufacturers await you and your friends. Sponsored by the Lone Star Region-NMRA. Registration \$45.00 before February 1st, \$55.00 after. Hyatt Place Dallas/Garland and Firewheel Conference Center Hotel, 5101 North President George Bush Highway, Garland, Texas 75040 More information: bu1977@att.net, www.2018Sn3Symposium.com or call (214) 507-7779

May

5th – 6th 2018 Austin Area Train Show. Sat. 10:00 am – 5:00 pm, Sun. 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. Adults \$7, children under 12 free with adult. Clinics and self-guided layout tour included. Williamson County Expo Center, 5350 Bill Pickett Trail, Taylor, TX (just minutes past Dell Diamond). For more information: trainshow@austinrailway.org or <https://austinrailway.org/trainshow.html>

Excursion Train Trips

Austin Steam Train; Cedar Park, TX; (512) 477-8468; www.austinsteinsteamtrain.org

Grapevine Vintage Railroad; Grapevine, TX; (817) 410-3185; www.gvrr.com

Old Hickory Railroad; Jackson, LA; (225) 634-7397; www.louisianasteamtrain.com

Texas State Railroad; Palestine & Rusk, TX; (888) 987-2461; www.texasstaterr.com

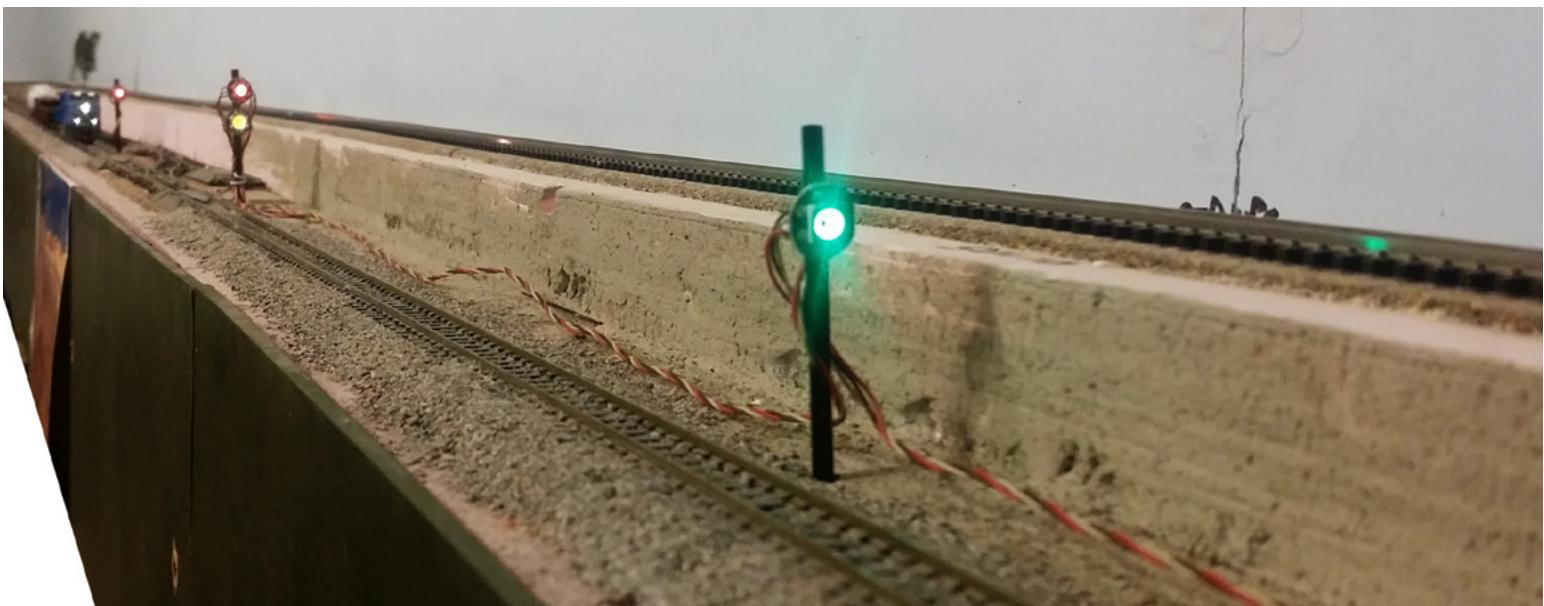
Please consider our deadlines for submittals and publications to allow adequate lead time to correctly announce your event – Column submission deadlines are the 15th of January, April, July and October; publication of the Marker Lamp is the middle of the following month.

Electronics



...RRRduino...

by Speed
www.TxNamib.com



The One Pin RRRduino Signal System!

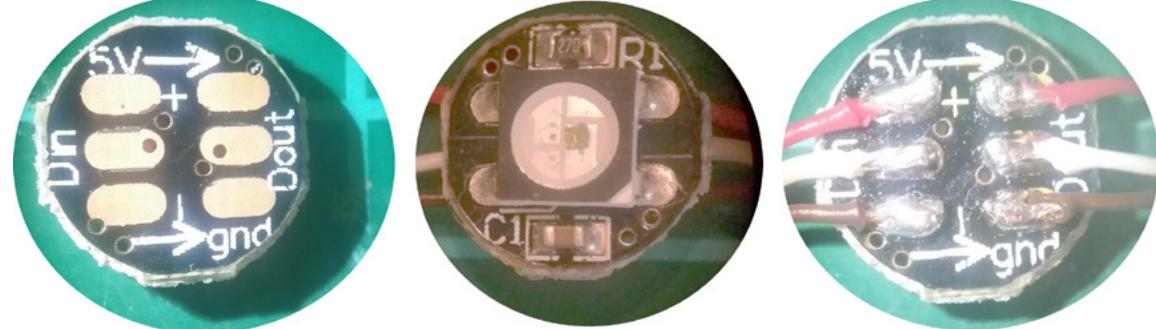
Yes, you read that right, you can control a whole signal system with up to 200 lights by using a single Arduino pin. And no, this was not all my idea, some of the credit goes to my friend Tom, but since I already had something using the same technology [up and running](#) using a Nano, I do not feel too bad telling you about it.

There is a tiny 8 pin chip out there called a WS2811 which is a three channel LED driver, and you might find them on the interweb as NeoPixel LED driver chips. They need power and ground, typically 5 Vdc, and data to be loaded into the three registers inside the chip, one for each of the LEDs the chip controls. So, in most cases out there today, the LEDs connected are Red, Green and Blue (RGB for short) and by setting the three registers each with an 8 bit value (which in English means a value from 0 to 255, since $2^8 = 256$, but since 0 is an acceptable value too, the maximum is $2^8 - 1$ or 255). With three 8 bit color values, you can create more than 16 million colors with

these RGB LEDs. Waau, you say, who wants that, over spec'd and overpriced? No, it gets better, there is also a WS2812, where the WS2811 chip is embedded inside the RGB LED package containing three LEDs (RGB) with the driver chip too, included on a small PC board and only \$18 for 100 pieces!!!



The larger "Pixel" compared to a penny.



Easy to solder and LEDs visible next to the WS chip in the middle. Right shows 6 wires, but you can daisy chain the 5V and GND lines underneath the layout, so only 4 of the 6 need to go to the Pixel.

NeoPixels and/or Pixel-lights are already famous for putting a string up on your house during Christmas and instead of making the whole string green or red, you can make each individual element in the string a different color. I know, unbelievable, but I have a short [YouTube video](#) as proof. I don't like heights much, so I put all the Pixel strings behind the facia board on my house, so I can keep them up the whole year!

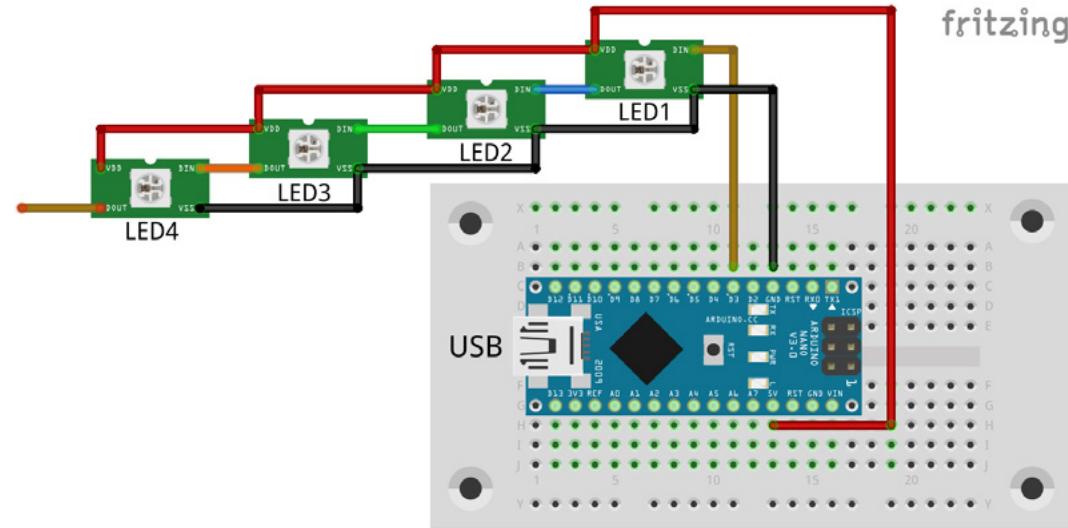
Now I can do Pink and Red for Valentine's Day; Green and more Green for St Patrick's Day; Red, White and Blue for Independence day; and of course Purple and scary Orange for Halloween. My oldest daughter even looked up the official 2017 color, so we had some kind of [Greener](#) running on New Year's Day! The strings are not exactly cheap yet, about \$15 to \$24 for a 50 element string, measuring anything from 6 to 12 feet, depending on the spacing of the elements, but keep an eye out, the prices are already falling.

So, how do they work? You already know that the chip has 3 registers and each LED needs 8 bits, and thus 24 bits of data are sent in per "pixel", and I say sent in and not clocked in, since there is no line or extra pin for a clock signal. A data bit by itself has a high part and a low part and by having the high a certain length determines if a 1 or a 0 is transferred into the chip. So by changing the data line twice per bit, it embeds the clock for you in the data. And here is the real magic about the data passed along the string: imagine you sit at a big picnic table and uncle Joe scoops the ice cream at the one end and asks everyone to pass the cones on to the next person...but, with the small difference that you don't pass the first one you get on, you keep it and pass the next (and the next) one on. And when there are no more cones coming, you can start eating! That is exactly how the 2811 and 2812 chips pass the data from one to the next.

The first chip takes the first 24 bits for itself from its input pin and it sends everything else along to the next one on its output pin...who in turn takes the first 24 bits it receives, and again, sends the rest on. When there is nothing more coming for a certain amount of time, all of them then loads the data into its LED drivers and the LEDs show the new colors. This also ensures that all the LEDs, along the whole string, gets updated almost at the same time.

Who knows how many LED sets or pixels are in the string, no one, only the guy sending the data out needs to make sure it sends enough data out. At the picnic, Johnny at the far end, would not get an ice cream if uncle Joe did not scoop one for everyone else and then one for him!

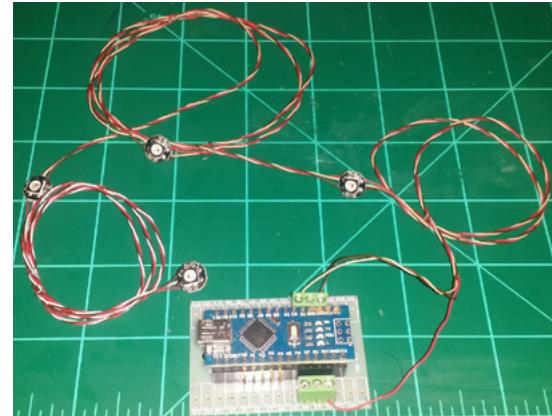
What is really nice in this kind of system, if you want to add a pixel anywhere in the middle, all you need to change is the software sending the bits out! Just insert the needed 24 bits in the appropriate place in the data stream. Ready for a schematic?



fritzing shows the connections

In the breadboard view above (thank you again fritzing), the power source and data is from the USB port. Similar warning here as with the servos being driven from an Arduino, when you load a Nano or Uno with too many current drawing devices, you need to add a stronger 5V power source to the Vin pin or power the servos or pixels directly with a bigger 5V supply. Here the 4 pixels will do just fine, but switch to plan 'B' when you hook 100 pixels up!

Pin D3, our Arduino data pin, is connected to the first WS2811's Data-In pin (ochre color, labeled "DIN"), and this is where uncle Joe is going to send every ice cream to. LED1 will then pass the next 24 bits and more to LED2 (blue wire), which in turn will send the 3rd set of 24 bits and more to LED3 (green wire), you get the idea, right?

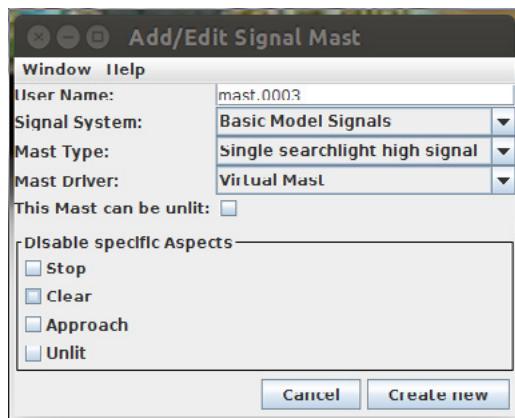


Hooked up and ready to go!

Where do these bits come from and why are we using RGB LEDs, since we, model railroaders, do not need blue? Last question first, they are (including the blue LED) only \$1.69 a piece when you [buy 100](#), and you simply never need to turn the blue on, unless you need lunar signals and then you would turn on all three color LEDs, since red+green+blue makes white. Red and green individually are obvious, and yellow is done with red and green on together. You can also increase or decrease either the red or green amount to get the special yellow flavor for your fall of '69. They did have signals back then, right?!?

Where do the bits come from, well, the Arduino is going to send them in groups of 24 and will format the 1's and 0's with the timing they need. But who decides which signal is showing Stop, Approach or Clear? You do! You could either have the Arduino IDE's terminal window open and type R,R,Y,G and send it, to make our 4 LEDs red, red, yellow and green, or you could use S, S, A and C (for Stop, Stop, Approach and Clear)! Well, we know, this scheme ain't going to happen for long, as the layout owner you have other things to do! Just ask your dispatcher to do it then!

So all jokes aside, you could either invent your own simple signal-decision system using more Arduinos and we will certainly publish your idea here if you like, or we could fall back on the trusted JMRI. (Warning, the next few paragraphs are filled with computer geek speak, please skip to the paragraph before the Arduino code: "Let's do some basic fun things..." if JMRI is not your thing)



JMRI, adding a signal mast

We simply create all the signals in JMRI and then hook all the Logix or Simple signal logic in to decide what goes green or red when, plus we use a little Python script to monitor the signals as they change. When something changes in a signal's state, we then simply update the Arduino over the serial port. So, we make JMRI send the "R,R,Y,G", simple enough? So for the example here, we are going to use Signal Masts, found in PanelPro under Tools Tables Signals Signal Masts, and we are using the "Comment" field to make sure the signals are represented in the order we want them on the wire string. Since LED1 is always grabbing the first 24 bits, we need to make sure that Mast's data is sent first by the Arduino, so we label its data with '0' in front. And LED2 gets '1' in front.

In order to make things a little harder, since you are so super smart, I am going to use a hexadecimal number for the order in the string, and then 3 more sets of hexadecimal numbers to set the red, green and blue values for the Arduino. Each one of the sets will be used for the signal's aspects Clear, Approach or Stop. Why, because you can use the this to adjust the yellow of ANY signal individually to your liking by simply changing the comment in JMRI. You can also use an LED as a street light and make it go white, since we can send the blue value as well! Again, instead of you sending R,R,Y,G, we are going to send "00FF0000,01FF0000,02BBDD00,0300FF00" to accomplish the same. If we added a white one for LED5 at the end, it will send: 04FFFFFF (RGB with all three 100% on).

We will also be able to update only 1 LED at a time instead of sending the whole list every time across the serial or USB port. When the second signal changes from **Stop** to **Approach**, all we need to send is "01BBDD00", where red=0xBB, green=0xDD and blue=0x00, my first attempt for yellow.

	System...	User Name ▾	Aspect	Comment
Turnouts	IF\$vsm...	mast.0001	Stop	00:00FF00:BBDD00:FF0000
Sensors	IF\$shs...	mast.0002	Stop	01:00FF00:BBDD00:FF0000
Lights	IF\$vsm...	mast.0003	Approach	02:00FF00:BBDD00:FF0000
Signal Heads	IF\$vsm...	mast.0004	Clear	03:00FF00:BBDD00:FF0000
Signal Masts	IF\$vsm...	mast.0005	Clear	04:FFFF00:808080:000000
Signal Groups				
Signal Mast Logic				
Reporters				
Memory Variables				

Showing the Signal Masts in JMRI

The shown System Name and User Name have no play here (you need to wait for a future article), the only numbers that matter are in the Comment column where the first two digits in hexadecimal specify the position of the LED in the wire string, and the RGB parts between the colons specify the colors for **Clear**, **Approach** and **Stop**. And you can change any or all of them, mine are exactly the same because I was lazy. An Unlit aspect is obviously dark or black, so we would just send 03000000 to turn all the LED parts off at the 4th signal.

There is a Python script, or maybe better known as a Jython script (since Java is allowing the Python here to run) that you would need to run AFTER all your signals have their Comment values filled in. You will need to restart PanelPro if you add or remove a signal mast, but not if you change the Comment to update the color. Also please don't think changing the **Approach** colors in the Comment will automatically update the signal, the signal color update is only sent when the signal's aspect changes. So change it to **Clear** and then back to **Approach** to see the new color. You would use Panels->Run Script..., and select OWS.py to run it.

The OWS.py Jython script can be downloaded from the TxNamib site, but no need to confuse our Embedded Engineers, we will stick with Arduino code in this article. Keep in mind that we are simply looking for a text string coming across

the serial interface, then update our list of "pixels" with the color or colors. The Arduino then sends the 24 bit values for each pixel out on our single D3 pin. We are also going to keep it simple here and use the NeoPixel library from Adafruit, to avoid having us making the pin high and low at the specific times; their code already works!

Let's do some basic fun things first, random aspect colors on our signals, so you can get an idea what is at the heart of this. We include the NeoPixel library from Adafruit. (If the library is not on your computer yet, go to Sketch Include Library Manage Libraries and then search for "neopixel" and select and install the Adafruit NeoPixel library. I did not need to restart my Arduino IDE, but it would certainly be the first thing to try if the compiler complains about a missing .h file.) We then define a few constant things like the number of aspects to choose from and the number of signals in the string. We create the onepin as an Adafruit_NeoPixel object with the number of signal or pixels in the string, the pin the data will leave the Arduino on and the type and rate of the transmission. I have always used the default, no need to bother here. (I ask for forgiveness, the code shows pin 6, another PWM pin, please use 3 if you care.) Then we create all the colors we need, since it is easier to do that than remembering 255, 215, 0 as yellow, and since it is all in one place, we can easily change the colors to our liking. We then put all the colors in an array, just so we can randomly pick one easier.

```
#include <Adafruit_NeoPixel.h>

#define ONE_WIRE_PIN 6
#define SIGNALS 5
#define ASPECTS 5
#define BRIGHTNESS 10
#define VERSION "OneWireSignals r0.02"
#define BAUD 115200

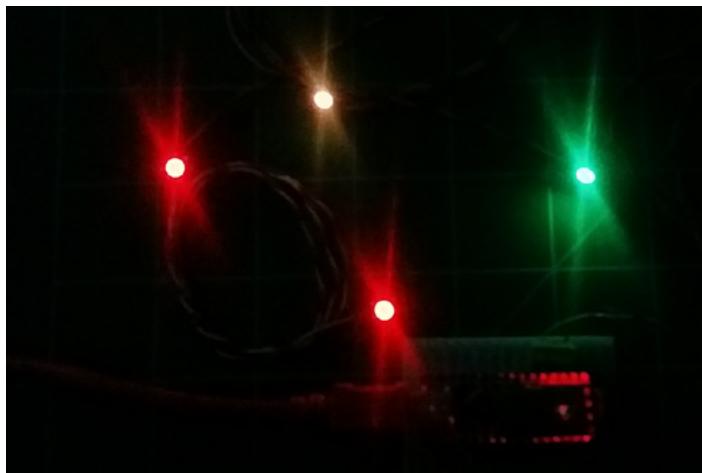
// 8 signals on ONE_WIRE_PIN
Adafruit_NeoPixel onepin = Adafruit_NeoPixel(SIGNALS, ONE_WIRE_PIN, NEO_GRB + NEO_KHZ800);

// define all the colors we might need
uint32_t red = onepin.Color(255, 0, 0);
uint32_t yellow = onepin.Color(205, 125, 0);
uint32_t green = onepin.Color(0, 255, 0);
uint32_t lunar = onepin.Color(255, 255, 255);
uint32_t unlit = onepin.Color(0, 0, 0);

// create an array of them
uint32_t colors[ASPECTS] = {green, yellow, red, unlit, lunar};

// like always, all the one time setup parts
void setup() {
    onepin.begin();
    onepin.show(); // Initialize all signals to dark or unlit
    Serial.begin(BAUD);
    Serial.println(VERSION);
} // setup()

// and we loop forever
void loop() {
    byte n = random(0, SIGNALS); // pick a random pixel to change
    byte aspect = random(0, ASPECTS); // pick a random aspect for that signal n
    onepin.setPixelColor(n, colors[aspect]); // set signal n to aspect
    onepin.setBrightness(BRIGHTNESS); // too bright is bad
    onepin.show(); // show it
    delay(1000); // wait 1 second
} // loop()
```



Demo in action on bench!

In `setup()` we set the NeoPixel string up with `begin()` and then `show()` the pixels while they are all still blank to clear the string out. And then we print the version of this code, so in 2 years, you can tell what was burnt into your Arduino board by looking at the text coming in on the serial port.

The fun part is in `loop()` where we calculate a random number from 0 to SIGNALS-1. We have 5 signals now. A number is chosen from 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, since the first signal is at position 0. And the 5th one is at position 4. Yes all Greek it seems, but be at ease, it is as simple as 0 being the first number and thus pointing to the first signal.

We do the same for picking an aspect, from 0 to ASPECTS-1, so in the next line, we can assign signal n the color from the array at position aspect. We do some magic to prevent an eyesore and reduce the brightness of the pixel (`BRIGHTNESS=10`), since these guys were originally invented for outdoor things. The `show()` function will update the string again and then we wait one second before we run `loop()` all over again.

So when you have this random demo working, jump over to the website and continue down the text to get the JMRI version working. For homework, change the “randomness” to have fake ABS signals that would go from red to yellow to green and back, so it looks like a train is moving down the wire too, filled with ice cream!

As usual, watch when copying code, there is a big difference between `,`, `"` and `.`. Only the last one is useful. Again, the code, as well as this PHD thesis, is to be found for your convenience at the one and only <http://www.TxNamib.com/EnS/rrduino/division-3-clinic/one-pin-signals>. **ML**





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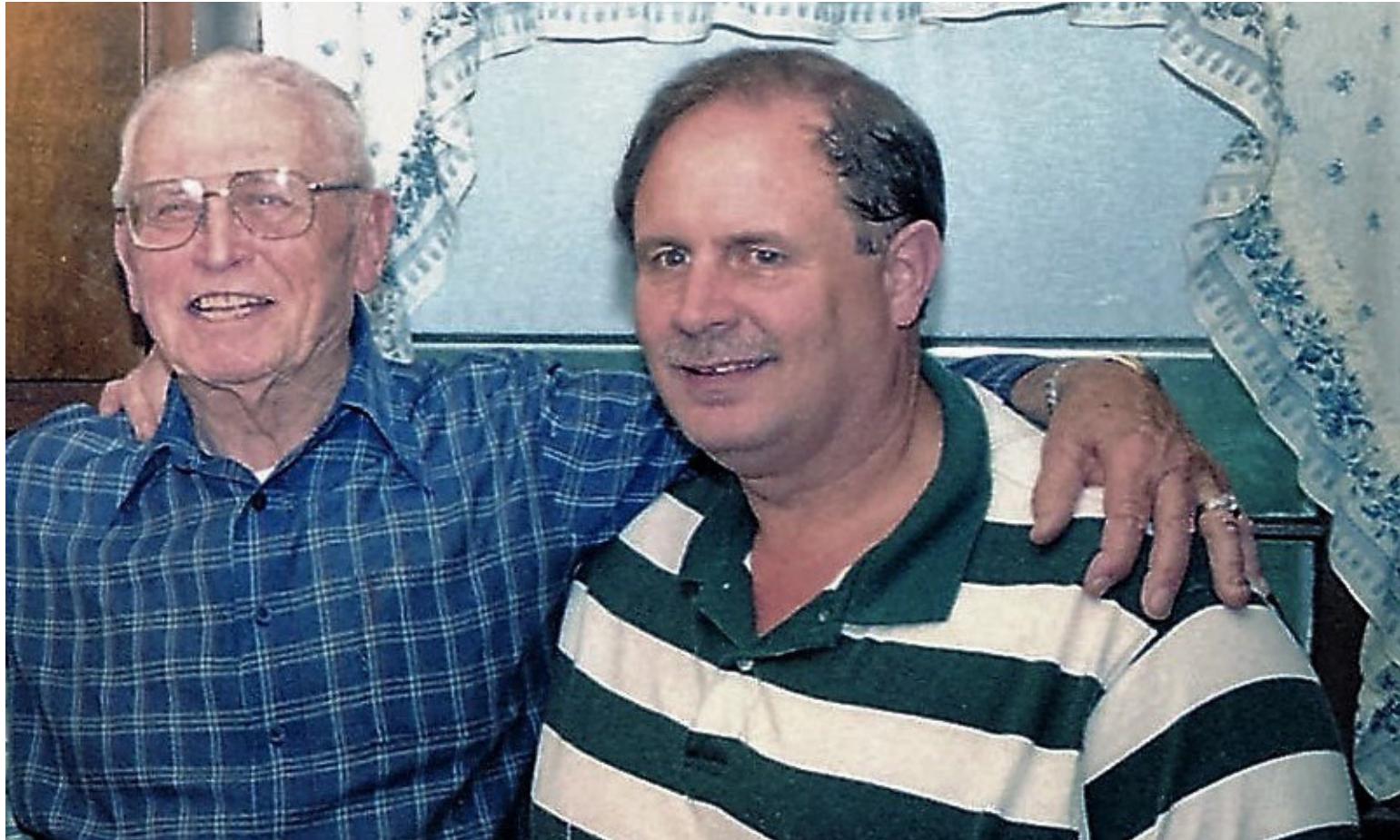


Malcolm Vordenbaum

By Richard Kamm

SUE
LINE

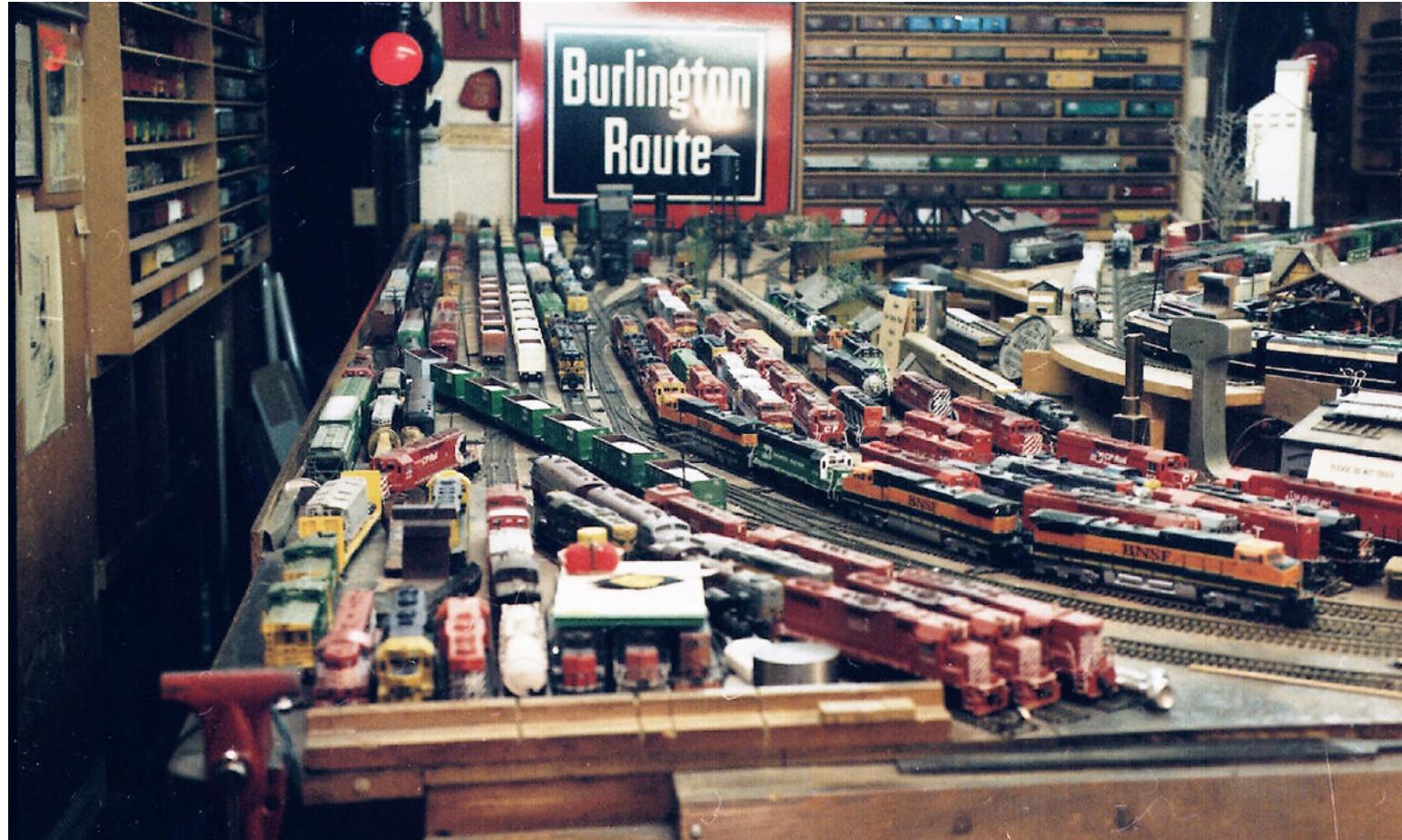
***I can say that I have
“all the scenery
from his layout.”***



1. Malcolm Vordenbaum (l) and Richard Kamm (r) at Malcolm's home in Wichita Falls, Texas, 1999

This time I want to share with you another Giant in the Hobby- the late Malcolm Vordenbaum (Photo 1) of Wichita Falls, Texas. Malcolm Vordenbaum, the "Dutchman" lived with his wife Ferne Vordenbaum along with his beloved model railroad the "Caaruth and Central" (Photo 2) named for the street corner he lived on when he lived in Dallas, Texas. Malcolm Vordenbaum was a giant of building, which often, much to Ferne Vordenbaum's chagrin involved her kitchen table. In fact most of the towns on the Sue Line including Brandon, Robinson, Shattuck, Sue City, Robert's Crossing, Leming, Maryville and Lake Hamilton along with the yards at Union Street and Busy were built on her kitchen table. I would draw out the centerlines of the track plan on $\frac{1}{2}$ inch Homasote and transport them to Wichita Falls. Malcolm Vordenbaum would lovingly build the track work hand laying all the track and turnouts and then return the Homasote to me to install on the Sue Line.

Malcolm Vordenbaum was in construction by trade and he worked on many of the old buildings in downtown Dallas, Texas. Sadly, many of these have been torn down. Malcolm Vordenbaum was a superintendent for J.E. Morgan &



2. C&C Railroad, 1999
Sons Construction Co. (home office in El Paso). The family moved to Wichita Falls in 1957 for Malcolm Vordenbaum to go into business with his father and brother M.A. Vordenbaum and Sons General Contractors. This company was the largest construction company in Wichita Falls when they dissolved to retire. Malcolm Vordenbaum had a massive shop in Wichita Falls, but he loved to work in his train room and kitchen. Malcolm Vordenbaum made turnouts the "old fashion way" using his eyesight and a file. No fancy gigs were used. All of the turnouts were fashioned on the layout edge in his "switch point" place. Here each turnout switch point was carefully and lovingly prepared.

Malcolm Vordenbaum also built model bridges from scratch. I am fortunate to have two of them on the Sue Line. Mary Ann Bridge (Photo 3-named after his daughter) and Ferne Bridge (Photo 4- named after his wife). The latter won

first place in a National Model Railroad Association Lone Star region in June 1955. It was never placed into use until Malcolm Vordenbaum gave it to me for the Sue Line. In return, I wanted to honor Malcolm Vordenbaum and name an industry after him. I chose a backdrop building and named it the "Vordenbaum Erection Company" (Photo 5). There was of course, a double meaning there. Shortly after the building was named, Malcolm Vordenbaum made a visit to the Sue Line. While there he was taking videos of the layout and of course included "his" building. Malcolm Vordenbaum reported that after his return to Wichita Falls, one evening he was showing his videos to a young couple who was visiting his home. Malcolm Vordenbaum reports that after seeing the video, the couple never returned!

World War II, Malcolm Vordenbaum was in the Seabees, a naval construction unit. After the War, Malcolm



3. Mary Ann Bridge



4. Fern Bridge



5. Vordenbaum Erection Co.



6. Control Panel

Vordenbaum was asked to be an extra on the 1944 movie "The Fighting Seabees" starring John Wayne and Susan Hayward. Malcolm Vordenbaum was very proud of this and was especially proud that he had a cameo appearance in the movie. At the end of the film after John Wayne has been killed, Malcolm Vordenbaum can be seen on a ridge shooting down at the enemy. He had taped TEXAS on his back and moved right and left. Malcolm Vordenbaum and another sailor were chosen to crown Susan Hayward, a young starlet at the time, as Queen of the Seabees. They spent a day at Smiley Barnett's ranch making publicity photos.

Malcolm Vordenbaum loved the Boys and Girls Club and left the bulk of his railroad and train collection to that organization. Malcolm Vordenbaum also loved Texas A&M University. He had a freight car on his layout which was painted up maroon and gray for Texas A&M on one side and purple and gold for LSU on the other side. Each time I visited, I would find that car in the display case and turn it LSU side out. Each time I revisited it was in the display case Texas A&M side out. The Vordenbaum paper mill building in Lake Hamilton is painted maroon and gray in his honor.

Malcolm Vordenbaum was friends with Emmitt Smith the famous running back for the Dallas Cowboys. Emmitt Smith made several trips to Malcolm Vordenbaum's layout. On one trip, Malcolm Vordenbaum mentioned to Emmitt Smith that due to a divorce I was going through at that time that the Sue Line might be available for sale. Emmitt Smith made a trip to Shreveport. After seeing the Sue Line felt it was too big for his building.

Malcolm Vordenbaum was not much for fancy electronics. Rheostats and toggle switches were the "modern" electronics he used. Turnouts were thrown by a series of "mysterious" white pushbuttons (Photo 6).

Although Malcolm Vordenbaum had plenty of track on his railroad, he did NOT do scenery. He did not believe in taking time from track work or running his trains to do scenery. There were only a very few structures on his layout and only one barren "tree." After his death, I was fortunate enough to get that one and only tree and I can say that I have "all the scenery from his layout."

I wonder if anyone else can say that?

ML

Frank Ellison

By Richard Kamm



SUE
LINE

“...it has more thrills per minute than a game of strip poker.”



Frank Ellison



Delta Lines boxcar

This story is about a man I never met. This Giant in the Hobby, the late Frank Ellison of New Orleans, Louisiana had great influence in transforming how I looked at model railroading. I read and re-read his articles when I first became serious about operations. Frank Ellison had a philosophy that the railroad was a stage and the trains were the actors on that stage. Each train should have a script or part which was defined by the operators. The operating-scheme was the plot of the play. Frank Ellison said "As the effectiveness of the play depends on the facilities of a well-equipped stage and props that can be used to carry out the illusion of reality, so the play of model railroading demands trackage arranged in mainline, yards, sidings and spurs so that the business of imitating a standard railroad at work can be presented accurately as well as dramatically."

Frank Ellison owned the Delta Lines, a magnificent railroad in New Orleans, Louisiana. Frank Ellison first wrote about the Delta Lines in August 1941 in Model Railroader (page 392). It was by today's standards a spaghetti bowl of track, but it worked flawlessly. Frank Ellison on page 89 of the July 1976 Model Railroader magazine reminded us of "The ART of model railroading".

In this article, he jolted us with the reality that the dreams we had when we first started "playing with trains" had been starved to death beneath a mountain of track, signal and train-control design. It was killed by "model engineering" and "model building" which had become so all-consuming that we had forgotten about the art of model railroading, and that if we lost ourselves in them that we would never produce a play.

Frank Ellison noted "Model railroading is more than simply running trains around a track. It is an art founded on the accumulated principles governing real

railroads, but with a separate and very definite set of rules of its own. It is a swift and endless kaleidoscope of dramatic situations, maneuvering, and problems- each with its own exciting moments of suspense and climax...it has more thrills per minute than a game of strip poker."

At one time, I had two videos produced by a New Orleans television station on Frank Ellison and the Delta Lines. Tragically, they were accidentally erased and I have not been able to find another copy.

Frank Ellison gave trains a purpose and a mission, they did not just run in circles. They went from point A to point B and finished at point C. The cars were carrying products and they had to be moved from the producer to the receiver. In the November 1955, page 26, Model Railroader, the Delta Lines was reviewed. Frank Ellison noted that "Repetition is the No. 1 killer on small as well as large layouts, and to avoid it, Delta Lines trackage and organization provide for unlimited diversity". Frank Ellison had two divisions on his Delta Lines and "operating in the Chapelle and Fillmore Divisions is like operating on two entire different railroads". Within his divisional setup there was a place for the operator who had a sense of urgency and speed and "hot-shots" as well as for the operator who liked a slower paced train that perhaps required more thought and mental acuteness. On the Delta Lines there

were no unrealistic quick turn arounds. Motive power and equipment was distributed about the layout and one had the feeling that there was a continuation of movement from one operating session to the next.

Frank Ellison used several simple elements which he borrowed from the real railroads. 1) Seniority and a 2) Call Board were used to funnel the right operators into the right operating positions. A 3) time-table was used to space the trains. A 4) dispatcher could follow the trains and help those that had gotten out of pace. Finally, the 5) Operating Code was used to clarify situations. Together these elements help things humming during an operating session. The use of communication between trains and the dispatcher was a key ingredient to give the layout a sense of reality.

For the last 30 plus years, the Sue Line has incorporated these elements to keep weekly operating sessions interesting for the attendees. We still write sequels to the prequels and by doing so we adjust the story every 4 or 5 years to keep things fresh. However, applying the timeless principles outlined above keeps our focus on telling a story with each iteration of the scheme. The story drives the operation.

What's your story? **ML**

Houston, Texas June 7 – 11, 2017

Prototype Tours BAYOU CITY LIMITED

By Ken Kaiser



PROTOTYPE TOURS LSR 2017 HOUSTON CONVENTION

One of the greatest opportunities that are available at train conventions is to participate in prototype tours. You get to experience real railroad operations that most model railroaders

and very few of the public will ever get to see.

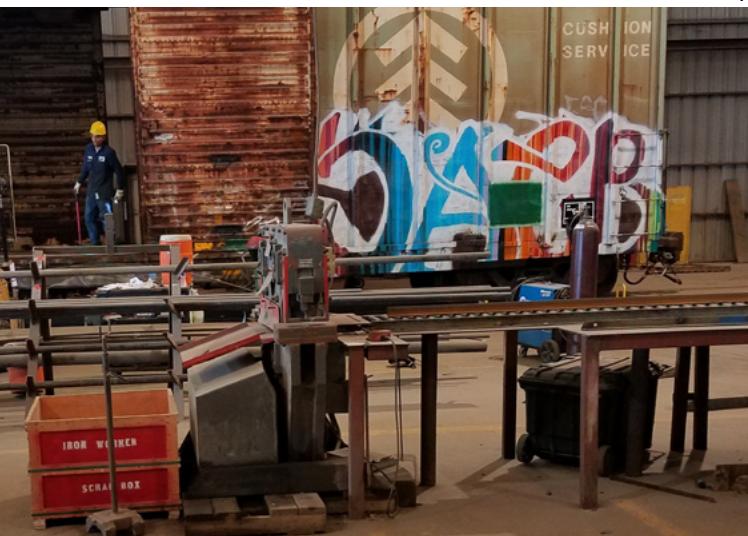
At the Houston convention Kelly Russell deserves credit not only for arranging our access to the GBW Railcar Facility (repair railcars), Beauchan Rail Services (clean tank cars for change of service) and the Houston METRO (light rail system) but he was our personal guide and mentor.

GBW Railcar Facility

This facility was located in the Greensport Industrial Center on the Port of Houston and the site of the old Armco Steel Plant with its massive structures converted to other uses. Switching services is provided by WATCO reporting identification WAMS (1). We were able to see the repair of several boxcar with inoperative doors (2). One had a door welded to the frame. We saw a 40 year old tank car which was undergoing a complete overhaul so it could be certified for an additional ten years of service (3).

Beauchan Rail Services Facility

This facility was located adjacent to the GBR facility.



They process cars with non-hazardous materials. Cars carrying hazardous materials are processed at their Baytown facility.

There are two servicing tracks which are capable of cleaning up to 10 cars at a time (4). Cleaning is required when the cars are changed from one product service like cooking oil to a lubricant. The inside of the car is washed with a high pressure steam system using a Dawn type detergent.

The residue is pumped into a storage tank car (5). When full the water is sent by truck to a processing facility. They also clean non-hazardous pressurized tank cars.

Nitrogen gas is used to force the residual vapors into a gas flare stack where the vapors are incinerated. When the flame goes out on the stack the tank car has been purged of

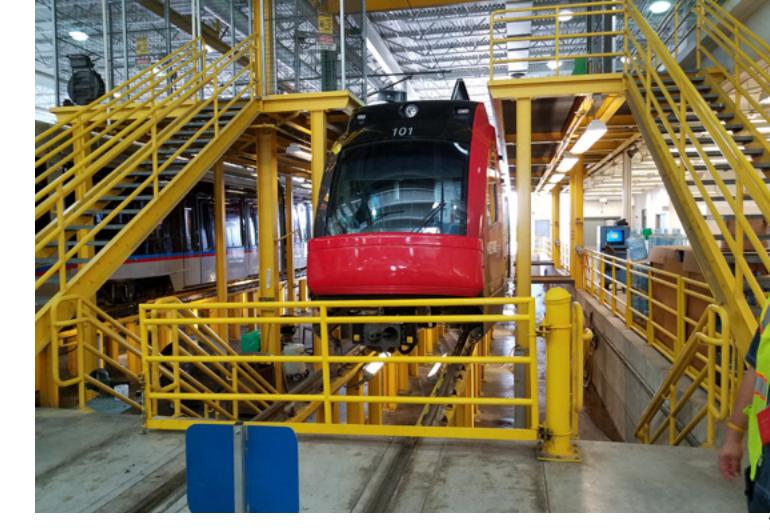




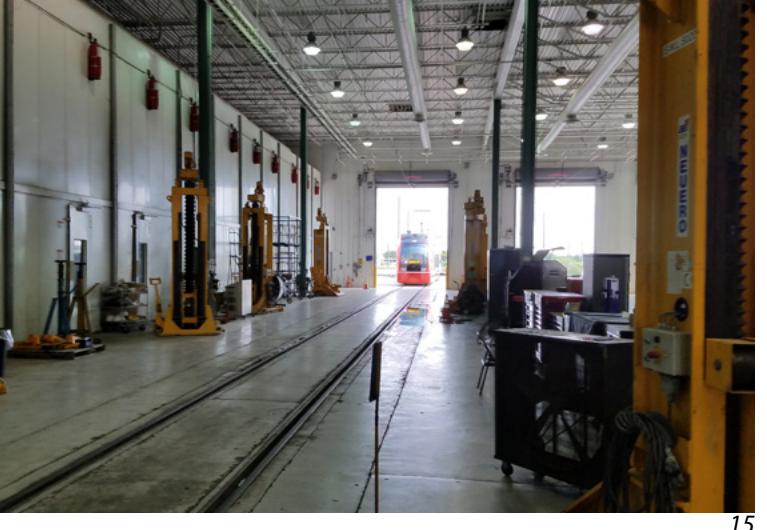
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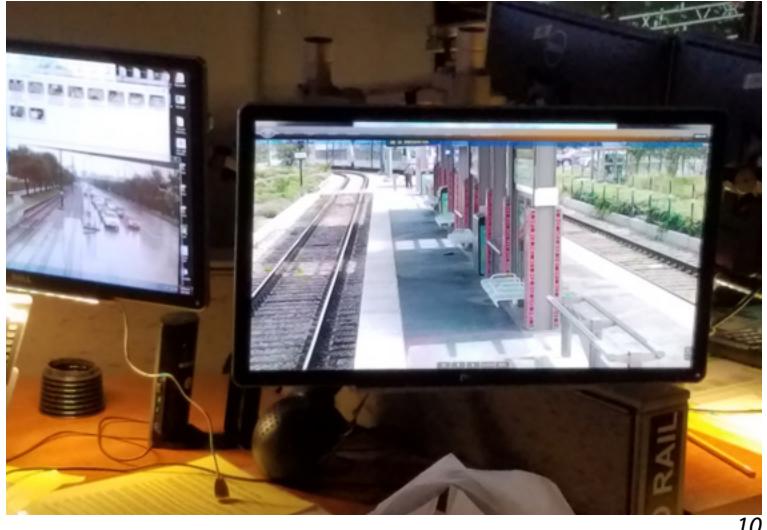
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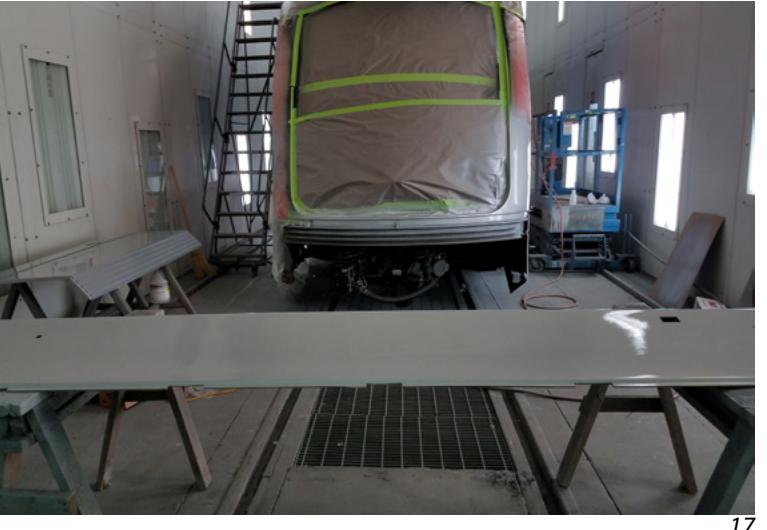
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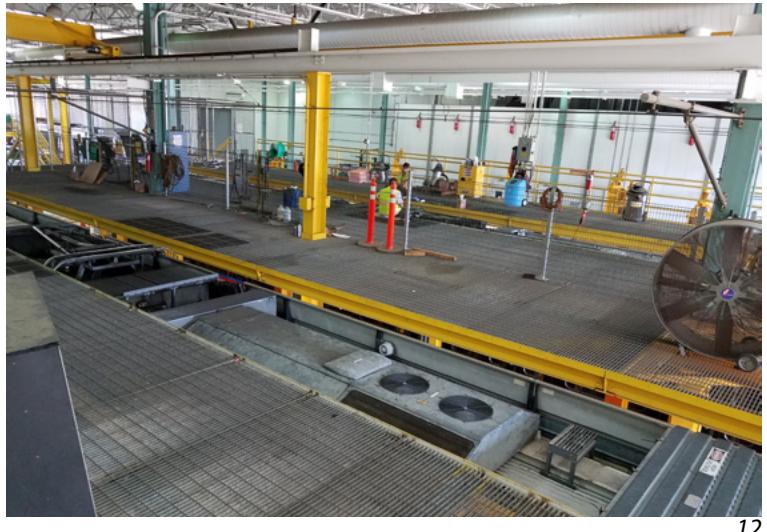
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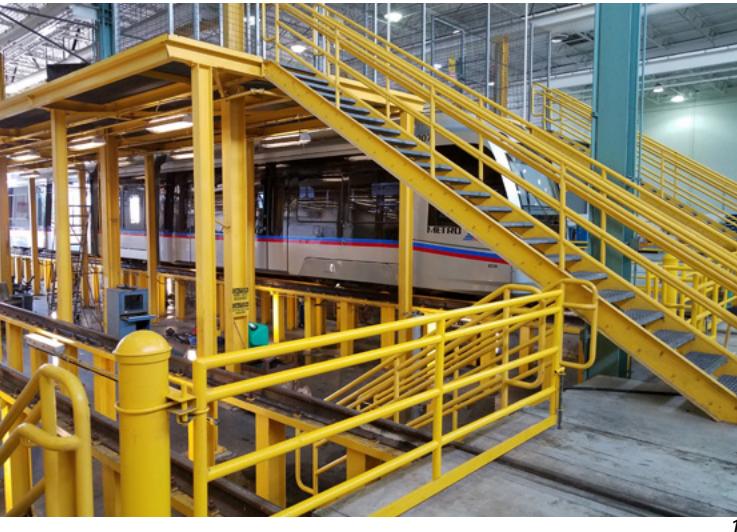
16



17



12



13



18



19

the flammable vapors.

For those prototype modelers who like to weather tank cars (6) shows a tank car with dirt spraying up on the tank end. It also shows the current practice of painting the car numbers on the trucks. You may ask why that is important. Well if there is an accident the railroad knows which trucks belong to each car and then they know when the trucks/wheels

were last serviced or replaced.

On our way out of the port facility we encountered a Schnable 550 ton 20-axle depressed flat car owned by the Contractors Cargo Co. A rare sight. The CCCX 400011 is used to transport large transformers (7).

HOUSTON METRO (Light Rail system)

The Houston Metro Light Rail System consists of three

lines. The Red line runs N/S. The Green and Purple run E/W and share the same tracks in the downtown area. There are two facilities the ROC and the S&I.

ROC (Region Operations Center)

We began our tour at the ROC (8) which houses the administrative offices, dispatch center, and the major repair facility.

At the Dispatch Center we were able to observe the movement of the cars throughout the system. While much of the switching is controlled by the computers the dispatcher can override the computer at any time (9). He also has access to cameras at each station so the dispatcher can monitor any activity at the stations (10). He also can monitor any station problems such as the ticket machines not operating.



20



21



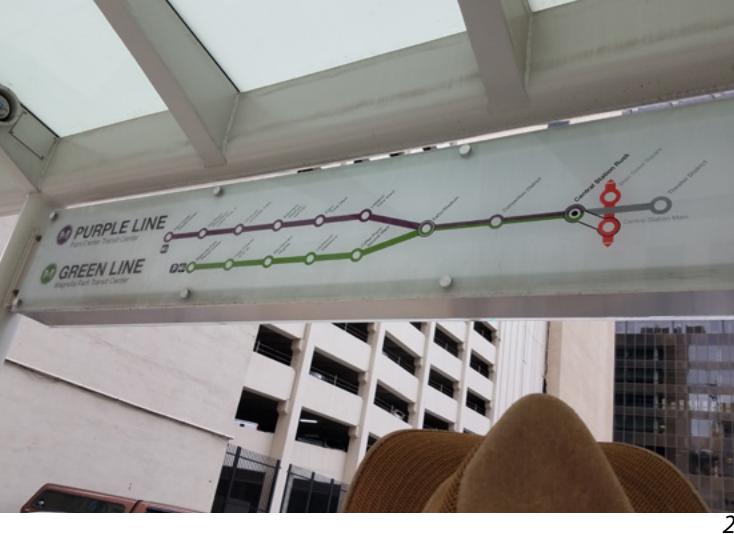
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26



22



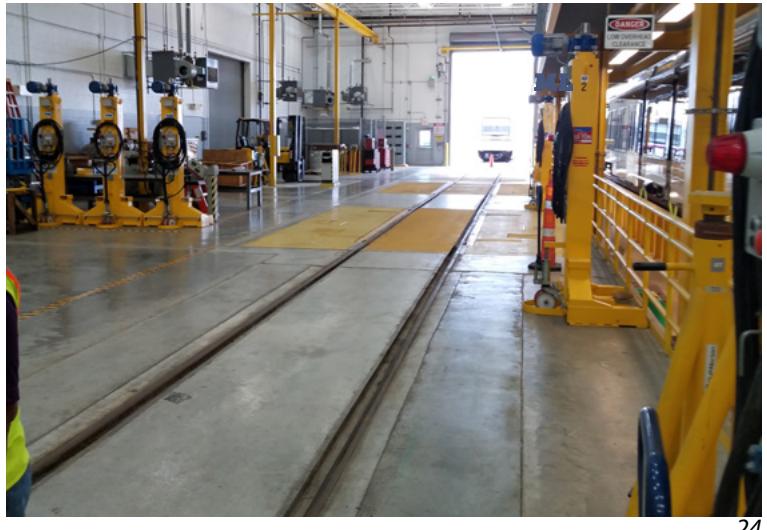
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27



28



24

The ROC maintenance facility does all the car maintenance on all the Red line cars (11-15). Fiberglass repair (16), painting (17) and truck rebuilding (18) is done for the entire fleet. All the equipment for track and the overhead wires are kept in this facility. The cocoon (20) actually contains a light rail car that was involved in accident with a vehicle at a crossing with the gates down. Each evening all the cars are cleaned and washed (21-22).

S&I (Safety & Inspection center)
The S&I is located near the end of the Purple Line so we took a light rail car to the center (21-22). The S&I does all the minor repairs for the Green and Purple lines. Upon arrival we were given a brief history of the Light Rail System. We then proceeded to view their maintenance facility (24-26).

After leaving the maintenance area we were able to get on board one of the H3 cars which was powered up so we could see what information the engineer has access to. The engineer has video screens which shows the track in front and behind the cars and the people in the cars (27-28). Another screen shows if there are any mechanical or electrical problems such as a door malfunction or a problem with some other component of the cars. He also can speak to the people in the cars and the Dispatcher with a hand held mic.

The two day prototype events were well worth the time spent and provided the attendees with a rewarding look into actual railroad operations.

And finally, a couple of pictures of the barbecue at the Rosenberg tower and museum. (29-30) **ML**



29



30



Precision Fillmore Avenue Roundhouse

By Riley Triggs

I've got a short list of layouts that intrigue me, and one of these rare birds is the *Fillmore Avenue Roundhouse* layout of Rick De Candido. Featured in *Model Railroad Planning* a couple of years ago, I have followed Rick's blog for awhile now as an inspirational activity, and we have exchanged emails along the way. So when I realized I was going to be nearby, I slyly manipulated my plans to allow for a visit. Apart from being a great experience presented by a most hospitable host, I took away a lot more from the visit than I had anticipated.

If you haven't read the article or seen his blog, you should. Rick has a lot of great ideas, and he has a designer's mind courtesy of his day job creating and repairing injection molds, which goes a long way towards explaining his approach to the hobby.

The extreme (and I don't use that word lightly) care and effort put into this layout alone would make it worthy of a visit, and it warmed my designer's heart to see and operate Fillmore, but that is not the most important thing about the layout. The layout impressed me most with regard to its dedication to precision.





Who is the murderer? It depends on the narrative and how that narrative is shaped by each storyteller.

I am always thinking about precision (along with a hundred other things at a given time) and where things fall on the precision spectrum. The film *Roshomon* by Akira Kurosawa is a favorite of mine that deals with the idea of precision through the recounting of events by four different people that result in four different narratives of the same event.

RASHOMON

EN MASAYUKI MORI · MACHIKO KYO · TAKASHI SHIMURA
PROD. AKIRA KUROSAWA

motivations, mechanisms of the characters and subjectivity versus objectivity in humans in general. Named after the film, the term *Roshomon effect* is used to describe selective memory and perception.

In model railroading, I think about the storytelling of the modeler as a constructed narrative that is influenced by that person's history, relationship to the prototype, motivations for creating the layout, and ultimately their version of the truth of the railroad they are modeling. Who is 'right' when modeling a prototype or a freelance model railroad? It depends on which iteration of *Roshomon* precision you wish to believe in. In Rick's case, he has a clear narrative and motivation for Fillmore Avenue.

There are many instances on Rick's layout that embody his version of the New York Central's narrative, but Fillmore Ave is ultimately shaped by the idea of precisely framed operations. A layout can be about anything, but good layouts have a central organizing concept and sensibility that



A clean and organized work surface produces precise models.



NYC 1740 creeps onto the inspection pit. The blackboard with schedule and stall assignments is beyond. This is run by a spread sheet that Rick continually updates during the session to keep things moving.

This precision of selective modeling is refreshing. All else about railroading has been practically trimmed away in order to reveal the multiple movements, timing, and mechanical intricacies of servicing a steam locomotive. But all else is also present in the layout at the same time, which is delightful. There are several of these connections to the larger business of the railroad represented on the layout, but they are supporting elements to the main idea of locomotive servicing.

There is the business of the railroad, in this case moving passengers, which is represented by a coach servicing yard. I didn't get to operate this section, but Rick explained how the pullmans were moved around and his musings on redoing the operations to a pure yard so that he could make and break trains versus service them.



The first stop for each locomotive entering the layout is the inspection pit. Timers are set for 20 minutes and an inspection report card is pulled to see if there are any repairs are required in the roundhouse.

departure ready times. Rick continually updates the board as the session progresses, so you have to keep alert.

And even the locomotives themselves are indicators of activities that occur beyond the baseboards of the layout as they all come from specific trains and have their own origin story and particular uses on the prototype. All that information Rick has ready to share just for the asking. That narrative builds significance into the op session and really rounds out the experience. And, surprisingly, all of this happens in a non-prototype layout.

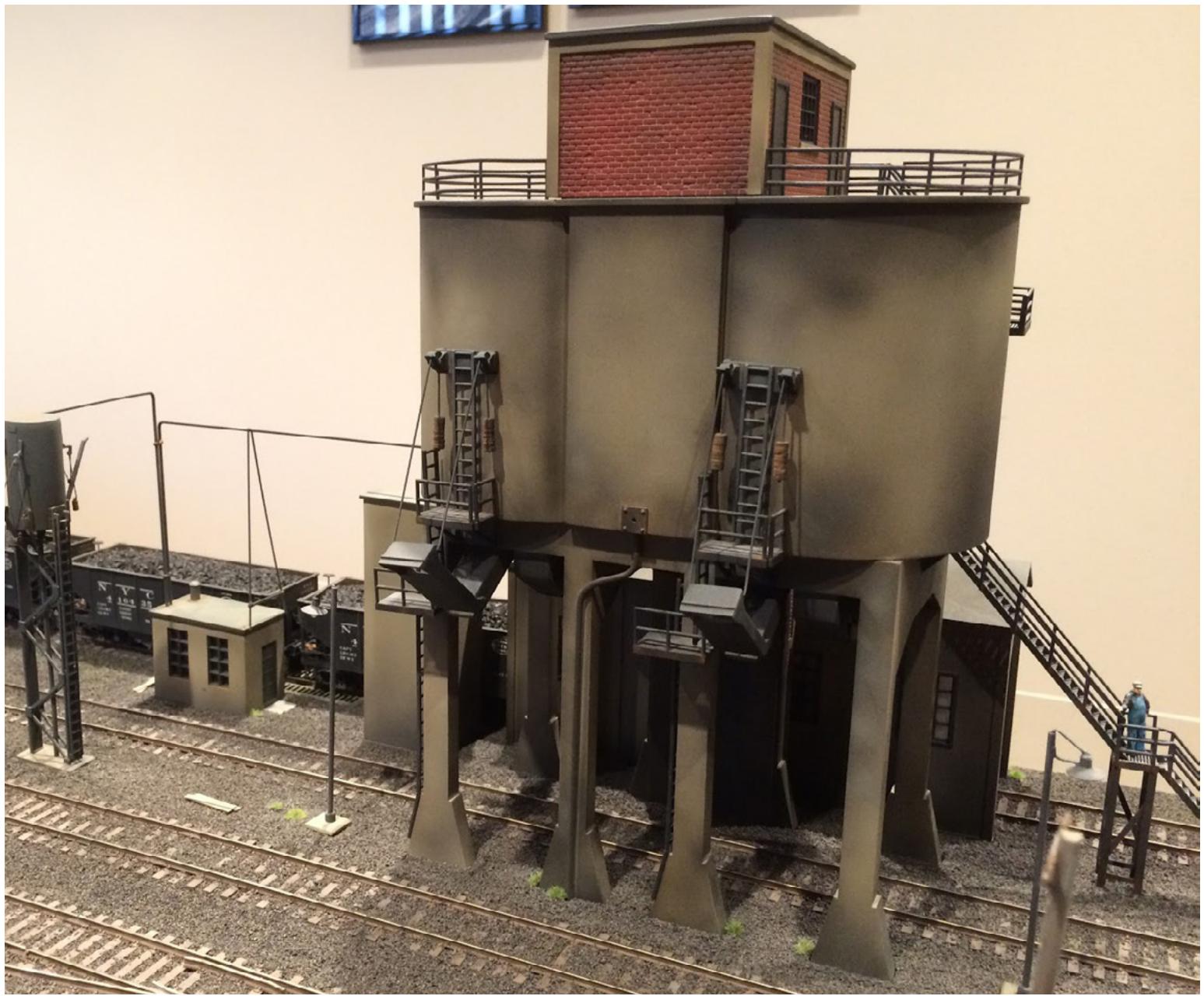
Rick chose to proto-freelance model a fictional New York Central roundhouse at Fillmore Avenue in Buffalo, NY. Created to fulfill an actual prototypical need, this facility services mostly passenger steam locomotives during stops at the NYC station without needing to perform the complex

and time-consuming backing and run around maneuvers that the real railroad had to do. It would have been a pretty slick operation had the NYC followed Rick's version!

I admit I normally wouldn't get so excited about a freelance layout, but Rick's command and execution of prototype locomotive servicing is as good as I have ever seen in any layout, so this is a prototype operations layout in my book! On my visit I was the head hostler (he may have another name for it), and Rick was the assistant hostler and everything else. The task at hand on the layout is simple, but there is complexity in accomplishing it, which is my favorite type of operations.

The operations are governed by a 1-to-1 real time clock and set up as a revolving set of tasks taking a locomotive from off the main line through the facility back to the ready track.

Each locomotive starts the process with the inspection pit. Timers are located at each servicing station to help the hostlers keep track of time, which is necessary because there is a lot going on with as many as 8 locomotives in the process at one time. During the 20 real time minutes at the inspection pit, a chance card is pulled that reveals any repairs that need to be made in the roundhouse. I think about 20% of the cards require one of the varying levels of repair denoted



Coal and sand towers. Line up the spouts and chutes on your locomotive! Fantastic modeling on all of these structures.

by time needed in the shop.

Next, each locomotive goes through the coaling tower and sand tower. Shorter locomotives need two stops, while longer ones reach both coal and sand at the same time. This process takes 20 minutes. Be sure to line up the spout and chutes properly!

Then comes the ash pit and cleaning station. Locomotives pull over the pit, blowdown (F4 on the throttle) and drop their ashes, which takes about 5 minutes, then a second move is required to get them in position to be hosed down for about 15 minutes. (Look at the finely modeled hoses and valves on the concrete apron!) The ash car usually needs to be swapped out with an empty car during a session as well as coal cars and any other miscellaneous work. In my session, a snow plow was brought in for spotting alongside the roundhouse. Next, it's on to the roundhouse.

A quick peek at the chalkboard (on the monitor) shows the stall assignment and cut off time for being at the ready track. A hop onto the turntable and into the assigned stall until it's time to get to the ready track. Before the ready time, the locomotive is turned and placed on the ready tracks spotted at the water spout for refilling. F9 on the throttle turns on the water sound. Then a short simulation of an automatic train control test involving some throttle manipulation, and the locomotive is ready to depart to find its train beyond the baseboard.

The precision of Rick's narrative is what impresses me most, and that is the unexpected take away I have from my visit. I understood it immediately just by looking at the layout, and everything in Rick's explanation supported that understanding. It was then easy to move into actually operating the layout since every action fit precisely into Rick's constructed



The full ash car is ready to be swapped with an empty along with some other miscellaneous housekeeping switching.

narrative. Soon I felt the flow of that narrative, and the operations became a mechanism that smoothly ticks along with the real time clock. That flow is what every layout should set as a goal for its operations.

It was easy to operate for the three or so hours of our session. I could have gone longer, which would have heightened the feeling of the flowing narrative, because it's the repetition of the operations that characterizes the activity of servicing locomotives. It's an endless cycle of maintenance and procedures with its own rhythm that results in Zen-like satisfaction.

Besides the excellent modeling and smooth running equipment, it is the modeling of the operations that makes this a great model railroad, and Rick's layout is truly a dream. He has very carefully situated and integrated a freelance facility into the NYC system and framed a very specific activity

within the workings of that large system. The tight framing is what makes this layout special.

Usually model railroaders are looking for more glutinous satisfaction from their layout with "long runs", lots of track, excessive locomotive and rolling stock fleets, and frenetic operations. But I find those empty caloric experiences compared to layouts with restraint and fidelity to an identifiable sensibility and core concept such as Fillmore Ave.

So pick your own narrative and be conscious of how you are reacting to your own *Roshomon effect* and use that to your advantage as Rick has done. It will provide focus, meaning, and ultimately result in a better layout that fits you and your particular interests. The "sacrifices" many modelers dread that you make along the way in service of a constrained narrative are not sacrifices at all. Shedding them strengthens your core concept and allows a depth of investigation and experi-



Another housekeeping item, the snow plow was being repositioned in the off season to be ready for winter



A motorized turntable feeds and empties the stalls of a magnificent roundhouse.



The ready tracks are right next to the ash pit and washing station. NYC 1740 is on Ready #2 just finishing taking on water.



Interior of the roundhouse. The buttons are deadman switches that must be depressed

ence that otherwise would never be visible if clouded by those sacrifices not made.

Rick did an amazing job of precisely framing the operations of his layout, and my visit with him will have lasting effect on me and how I approach designing layouts and operations. Thanks, Rick!

ML



Ready tracks 1 and 2 with the water spout in between



Nathan Lind
2017 Youth Award Winner

Wanted! Nominees for the LSR 2018 Youth Award

- Who: Any boy or girl 18 years old or younger with an interest in model railroading.
- Where: One nominee from each LSR Division.
- How: Fill out the special Youth Award Membership Form available on <http://www.lonestarregion.com/>
- When: Submitted to the LSR Youth Chairman by January 1, 2018

For more information contact:

Jim Lemmond, Youth Chairman: jimlem@comcast.net



CCMRC 60th Anniversary Club Car

Order Form

The Crescent City Model Railroad club in Metairie, Louisiana still has a few of its Accurail Crescent Lines 50 foot HO Scale boxcar that was made to celebrate its 60th Anniversary in 2016. It is available for a donation of \$30.00 for each car, plus \$6.00 shipping for the first car and \$2.00 for each additional car ordered. It is available in one road number that commemorates the clubs founding in March of 1956. Extra decals are also available for just \$4.00 per set. To place an order, please send your payment made out to CCMRC for the correct amount to:



Crescent City Model Railroad Club
601 N. Lester Ave
Metairie, LA 70003-6131



Quantity: _____ X \$30.00 each

Total for cars: \$ _____

Shipping: \$6.00

Additional Shipping per car \$2.00 ea \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Thank you for supporting the Crescent City Model Railroad Club!

NOW AVAILABLE!

Color

Pike and Dealer Ads



Pike and dealer ads are now available in color for the same price! Share your railroad or advertise your business to others while supporting the Lone Star Region.

- Do you have a herald for your railroad?
- Is there a unique feature?
- What is the name of your hotshot freight or crack passenger service?

Let everyone know about it with a **color ad!**

Pike ads are **\$8 per year** and dealer ads are **\$20 per year**.

Payment should be made out to:
LSR NMRA

Contact Speed Muller
gertmul@gmail.com

Ads can then be sent as a JPG file attached to an email to:
rileytriggs@gmail.com

HOW TO INCREASE YOUR NMRA DIVISION MEMBERSHIP IN “5 SIMPLE STEPS”

Part 2

By Kenneth Kaiser
NMRA Life Member



Military modeling

Part one can be found in the Spring 2017 edition of the **Marker Lamp** pages 27-31.

In part one we explained how your enrollment tables should be set up, the function of each table and the type of individual or individuals who should be selected to work at these tables.

STEP 3: THE ENROLLMENT

Now we will look at what must be done, by the membership person, to convince an individual that joining the NMRA is the best way to fully enjoy their hobby.

You have done the hard part, the set up. Now you are ready to enroll new members or welcome back those individuals who have drifted away. Individuals will rarely walk up to the membership table and say, "I want to join the NMRA". I wish it was that easy. While your ultimate goal is to have them join the NMRA, your immediate goal is to make a friend.

Every individual that passes by the membership tables is a potential member and is attending the event for some specific reason. It may be to purchase an engine or car, some track, paint, buildings or just to view a club's modular layout. Whatever the reason, it is your job to discern that reason and engage the individual in a meaningful conversation.

You will be dealing with three groups. Each group must be approached differently. The initial interaction with each group will vary, but ultimately you must show each individual the benefits of becoming an NMRA member. The first group, are those people who have stopped by the clinic, test track or children's layout tables and have already interact-



Free weathering clinic

ed with NMRA members. The second group are those people who have seen the materials on the membership table (NMRA magazine, free clinic sign-up sheet, or the LSR Marker Lamp digital magazine) and stopped by to take a better look or sign up for the free clinic. The last group are those individuals who are just walking by the membership table.

A: The first group has already received some benefits and interacted with one of the NMRA members. By coming over to the membership table they have shown some interest in becoming a member. It is your job to find out what part of the hobby they are interested in. Don't waste your time or the individual's time discussing areas they have not interested in.

Start the conversation by asking some pertinent questions.

Do they have a layout?
Would they like to have a layout?

What type, home, modular?
What scale interest you?

These answers will give you a reference point to continue the conversation.

If they came from the clinic table ask them what they learned from the clinic. Listen to their story. Explain that at the monthly divisional meetings there will be other clinics where they will have the opportunity to meet members who are experts in all the phases of model railroading.

If they came over from the test track ask them if the member at the table was able to help them with their purchase. Explain that as a member they will be able to contact other members to assist in solving any model railroading problems they may incur.



Sign up table

If they come over from the children's layout ask the child if operating the engine was fun. Explain to the parent's that model railroading can be a family affair. Explain that each family member may have different skills that can contribute to the building and operation of a layout. I recently went to a clinic where a thirteen year old boy gave a fantastic presentation on weathering rolling stock. We have families where the wife is the model builder.

If you have a youth group in your Division provide the family with a contact person. In all cases, it is time to explain the NMRA organization and what is available at the National, Region and Divisional levels. Explain what is available at conventions. Show them the NMRA magazines that are displayed on the table and direct them to one of the articles that might interest them. Now is the time to hand them the membership form and ask them to become a member. Explain the mem-

bership options and payment methods (NOT THE RAILPASS). Seal the deal with a handshake and invite them to attend the next Divisional meeting.

B: The second group is more challenging. They were drawn to the membership table either by the magazine display or the free clinic sign-up sheet. If it was the magazines on display explain the different type of articles that are in the magazine and explain that as a member you will receive a copy in the mail each month. Ask them if they have a layout and if there are some phase of model railroading they might have a question about.

After answering any questions they might have, explain the NMRA organization and what is available at the Regional and National Conventions. Explain the monthly meetings and what takes place there. Ask them if that is something that would enhance their model railroading

Welcome to Elsewhere on the Crescent Lines

experience. Ask them if they would like to become a member and explain the membership application.

The person who comes to sign up for the new member clinic is most likely new to the hobby and does not have a layout. Explain what goes on at the new member clinic and have him/her sign the sign-up sheet and give them a copy of the flyer. If the individual appears more interested continue on with your normal presentation.

C: The third group, the passerby, is the real challenge. When you are working the table always stand up. Sitting down indicates that you are not interested. When someone passes by within speaking distance look them in the eye and greet them. If they are carrying a package, ask them if they purchased something for their layout. If there is a child, ask the parent if the child has had the opportunity to operate the children's layout?

Not everyone will respond, but those that do will give you the opportunity to find out about their hobby interests. Do they have a layout, are they a collector, are they engaged in another facet of the hobby or do they just like trains. The next question is, "Have you considered joining the NMRA?" It doesn't matter whether they say yes or no. In either case, this is your opportunity to explain why becoming a member will enable them to get more enjoyment out of model railroading.

The "MAYBE, I WILL THINK ABOUT IT," or, "I WILL COME BACK AFTER WALKING AROUND" is a no! This is the time to offer the \$9.95 RAILPASS. Explain that this is a one-time opportunity to join the NMRA for six months and attend the Division meetings and see if becoming an NMRA member is a benefit for you as a model railroader. If it is still a no, hand him the free clinic sign-up sheet and suggest they sign up for the free clinic. Many of the people that show up for the free clinic actually become members at the meeting.

STEP 4: Sponsorship

If there is one or more hobby shop in your area, see if they would be willing to sponsor the membership table by providing a free \$10 gift certificates to each person who signs up at the show. Post a sign showing they are the sponsor and display store cards if available. This is a win-win situation for the hobby store owner and the membership table person. The hobby shop owner receives two benefits.

First, the individual viewing the sponsorship sign or picks up hobby shop cards may go and investigate the hobby shop and purchase some railroad supplies. Secondly, new

members who receive the certificates will go to the store and history shows that they will usually purchase items exceeding the amount of the certificate.

Your membership person has one extra tool to sign up a new member. For every person who becomes a member, thank them and give them a free gift certificate as a reward for joining during the show. For the undecided individual dangle the gift certificate as means of reducing the membership fee. If that doesn't work offer the 6 month RAILPASS where they will have the opportunity to meet other NMRA members and experience firsthand the advantages of being an NMRA member. You may also offer the free \$10 gift certificate to make the RAILPASS MEMBERSHIP free. Remember a RAILPASS can only be issued to individuals who have never been NMRA members.

STEP 5: Spouse present

When a spouse is present, make sure you speak to both parties. Either of both may be the modeler. In some cases the spouse will make the final decision. If the spouse is antsy to leave, suggest that the individual sign up for the new member clinic.

WRAP UP

You will need some ones and nickels for cash membership payments.

Don't be discouraged if after all you work it is a no. If you sign-up one member out of every five that you speak to, you are doing well. Normally one person at each show does come back. I had a person come back a year later and said that he spoke to me at last year's show and wanted to become a member.

FINAL WORD

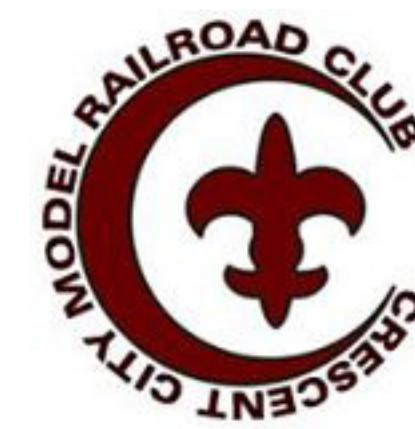
All this work will go for naught if your Division doesn't have monthly meeting that provide the new member with activities that convince them to remain an NMRA member. Now you have the facts. Go out there and build up the membership rolls.

ML



New return loop

Text and photos by Ken Mason



A number of months ago the members of the CCMRC decided to add more storage tracks and staging to the Crescent Lines River Division Layout. The only available or logical place for it was on top of our library bookcase in the downstairs club lounge. Originally planned to be about 20 inches wide and hold about 10 tracks including our two mainline return loop tracks, it quickly expanded to 30 inches and now holds 12 storage and staging tracks plus our return loop tracks. We decided to use code 100 flex track and Peco turnouts for the most reliable track we could use as the access above the addition once it was installed would be somewhat limited.

The construction crew of Mike Herbert Sr., Keith Stoufflet Jr., Brian Canales and Mike Herbert Jr. built the staging yard so that we could add the tracks and wiring drops while it was still down at floor level. We installed



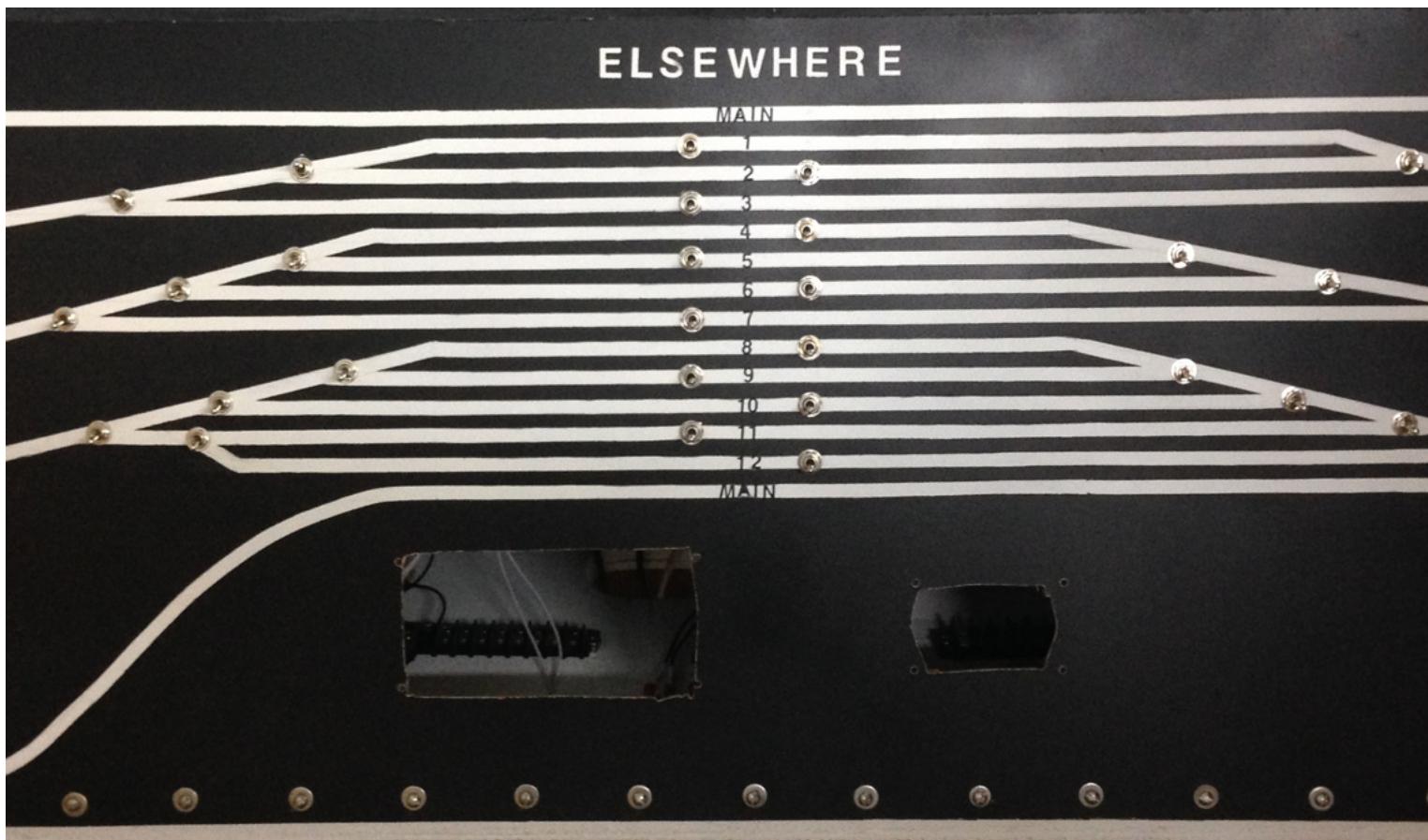
Yard 3





Natchez wye

Elsewhere control panel



Yard 1

homasote over the plywood, then laid the track and soldered the connections and drop wires for track power all while it was at a manageable working level.

Once all that was done and ready, members Ken Gaudet, Phil Tiller, Ken Mason, Maureen Mason, Keith Stoufflet Jr., Mike Herbert Sr., Scott Cruanes, Jonathan Esposito and Brian Canales came to the club on Easter Sunday and lifted it up on top of the bookcase and secured it with cantilevered supports from the bookcase. Once it was in place members Tom Mills, Brian Canales, Ken Gaudet, Phil Tiller, Michael Bushnell and Scott Cruanes went to work getting wire bus lines run to power the tracks. Ken Gaudet built the control panel that sits at the far end of the addition to control track power routing and the tortoise switch machines.

Since this addition is to represent points north of Natchez, Mississippi and doesn't really exist on the modeled portion of the River Division of the Crescent Lines, we decided to call this addition "Elsewhere". We installed a short view block along the edge of the addition so

trains cannot be seen from the crew lounge below. Each track has its own power control switch so that trains can be parked without having engines running at idle while stored. There are also two cameras at the entry end of the new staging yard to help monitor the yard.

At the same time that we installed Elsewhere we had to install a new section that ran above our club entry door to reach the Elsewhere section. We also installed a new wye in the Natchez area that will eventually lead to more industries for switching during operations.

These additions will greatly enhance our staging from the north of the River Division for our operating sessions and also allow members to store some personal trains away from the main layout.

Lone Star Region members are always invited to visit the Crescent Lines to see the new additions and other projects we have going on. **ML**

MINUTES OF THE LONE STAR REGION BOARD MEETING

Houston, Texas – June 7, 2017



photo: Riley Triggs

President Steve Barkley called the Annual Board meeting to order at 2:03 PM.

Roll call

All of the officers, directors and committee chairpersons were present except:

Voting Board Members:

Position	Elected Rep	Proxy
Division 1 – Mike Mackey	– Marc LaChey	
Division 3 – Jerry Hoverson	– Donna Orr	
Division 4 – Peter Kazmir	– Riley Triggs	
Division 7 – Don Kimmell	– Marc LaChey	

Non-voting Board Members:

Events – Bill Dryden

Open Chairs:

Membership –

Guests in attendance:

Ronald Burns
Nathan Oxhandler
Gil Freitag
Don Winn
David Grein
Tom Marsh
Mike Barrett

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Secretary Jeff Palmer provided a motion and Donna Orr seconded to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as published the Minutes of the January 21, 2017 Mid-Year Board of Directors meeting published in the 2017 Winter issue of The Marker Lamp - designated as 2017-06-07 LSR Motion 1 passed.

Officers Reports

President Steve Barkley

My second term as President is coming to an end. I am limited to serving no more than two terms so will be stepping down. I will become the LSR Board Advisor which is a voting position.

I have enjoyed working with the very talented and motivated modelers who have served as officers and in other positions in the LSR leadership. Much has been accomplished. Annual conventions were held each year in various cities, including, for the first time, Beaumont, Texas.

The LSR is now an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. This has already saved the LSR thousands of dollars and will continue to reap savings. As an IRS 501(c)(3) corporation the LSR is exempt from paying Texas sales taxes on its purchases including convention expenses. This may also apply to purchases in other states as we explore holding future conventions in Louisiana.

The Achievement Program is alive and well. LSR members continue to earn certificates and MMR's. Al Boos, MMR, oversaw the program for LSR members for many, many years. Duane Richardson, MMR, has now taken over for Al. Mike Mackey, MMR #573, and Jerry Wilson, MMR #577, are the LSR's two newest MMR's. Looking at the NMRA web site, the LSR now has 39 living MMR's.

2017 ELECTIONS

There were no contested elections in 2017. In recent years, it has been difficult for the Election chair to recruit candidates to actually run in a contested election. However, in 2017 the LSR elected the following highly qualified modelers to serve as officers:

President: Chuck Lind, MMR
Treasurer: Gert Muller
Division 1 Director: Mike Mackey, MMR
Division 3 Director: Donna Orr
Division 5 Director: Dave Lamberts
Division 7 Director: Don Kimmell (our resident "Elf")

Thank you again to Blake Bogs for serving as both the LSR Convention Chair and as an LSR Director at Large.

THE MARKER LAMP

Riley Triggs has done a superb job editing the Marker Lamp. Transition to on line publishing has enabled a longer, more colorful publication. Back issues can be found at the click of a mouse. (Why is it a mouse "click" and not a "squeak"?)

On line publication is also saving the LSR significant expense. This has helped the LSR to remain solvent without dipping into its reserves.

Remember, you earn Author points for photos and articles published in the Marker Lamp. Release your Muse and share your projects, photos, and thoughts with the rest of the LSR membership.

FUTURE CONVENTIONS

Mike Mackey and others are floating the idea of forming a permanent convention committee. This committee would assume the task of selecting a host city for the yearly LSR Convention and then actually selecting the dates, hotels, and handling registration, finances, and the host of other tasks associated with running a convention. Local groups would be welcome to help. This would allow future conventions to realistically be held in cities without a large LSR membership. New Orleans, anyone?

IN CLOSING

Thank you all for your interest and support during my four years as President. I never expected to hold this position. The LSR has many, many interested and dedicated modelers who have served both in elected positions and appointed committees. I am honored to have served as President.

Vice-President Bob Barnett

LSR members in the Houston/Division 8 area have been busy this year planning for the upcoming 2017 Lone Star Region Convention. President-elect Chuck Lind has made several committee appointments recently including a new convention chairman, Marc LaChey. This comes at a critical time in our region. Planning for a convention has become increasingly more difficult with expenses increasing for most activities and an increased uncertainty regarding attendance. I understand one of the early items of business is to inquire exactly what type and size of convention the region member want. The last several conventions held in D-FW and Houston have worked very hard to increase attendance with the result being a fairly flat attendance for several years, and this is in our two largest regional markets. D-FW attempted to produce a block-buster convention last year (and they did), with attendance similar to the recent D-FW and Houston conventions. Houston is planning a standard full length convention this year and so far we are short on attendees. Small wonder that the smaller cities are reluctant to take on an LSR Convention. Having worked on the committees for eight LSR conventions (in three cities) in the areas of layout tours, auctions, clinics and general chairman, I can testify that a lot of work and sweat goes into each convention. And no committee wants to come up short, but we will need a more defined target in the future.

Having enjoyed a lot of LSR Conventions since I joined in 1981, I hope the membership and the board will work with Marc to "right-size" our conventions to the length, content, and cost that most members want (and are willing to pay for).

See you at the Convention in June.

Treasurer Donna Orr

For the Fiscal Year of 2016/2017

Beginning Balance 05/01/2016

LSR Checking Account	\$ 6,143.18
Vanguard CD Fund	\$20,394.38
Vanguard Convention Fund	\$ 9,522.07
Acct Receivable for 2016 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Total LSR Net Worth	\$38,059.63

Not included in Total LSR Net Worth

Funds for the Bob Clark Award \$570

LSR Proceeds

Vanguard CD Fund Interest	\$ 40.08
Vanguard Convention Fund Interest	\$ 19.92
NMRA Region Rebate	\$ 1,919.00
Convention Advance DFW	\$ 2,000.00
Convention proceeds DFW	\$ 516.00
Dealer/Pike ads	\$ 184.00
Total Proceeds	\$ 4,679.00

LSR Disbursements

Website expense	\$ 269.60
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Historian Expenses	\$ 15.16
BOD Meeting Expenses	\$ 174.68
NMRA rebate to divisions	\$ 954.25
Contest Expenses	\$ 228.50
Election printing and mailing	\$ 57.36
Total Disbursements	\$ 1,509.71

Net Proceeds/ Disbursements	\$ 3,169.29
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Ending Balance 4/30/2017	
LSR Checking Accounts Total	\$29,798.92
Morgan Stanley CD fund	\$ 9,875.17
Restricted funds for the Bob Clark Award	- \$ 570.00
Restricted funds for Division2	- \$ 154.50
Restricted funds for Division 5	- \$ 36.50
Restricted funds for Division 7	- \$ 34.00
Total LSR Net Worth	\$38,879.09

Secretary Jeff Palmer

Since our January 21, 2017 BOD meeting, the LSR Secretary has worked with the Nomination Chair, Blake Bogs, to aid him in running a very successful election. As of May 1, the secretary has been working with various LSR officers on their transition to their new positions.

Currently the secretary is trying to pull together the various reports from the other LSR Officers and Chairs in preparation of the June 7, 2017 BOD meeting in Houston. The cooperation of the officers and chairs would be greatly appreciated.

I had the privilege of working with Ken Kaiser, Chuck Lind, and Jim Lemmond at the Houston Train Show recruiting new NMRA member in Division 8. The event was successful.

Looking forward to the 2017 convention. Reviewing the 2017 website, I'm really looking forward to a number of clinics, and touring some of the fantastic layouts - <http://bayoucitylimited.org/>.

We still do not have a 2018 convention committee.

The Parliamentarian John Garfield has resigned.

The board still does not have a Youth Chair or a Convention Chair. It would be good if the various Directors would look around their division, and see if there is a qualified candidate in their division.

As covered in the Webchair Report, the LSR Website has been very stable.

One last note, please remember in your reporting that education is our prime directive and to hi-lite it where possible in your reporting.

Advisor Bill McPherson

No Report

Directors Reports

Division 1 Director Chris Atkins reported that:

We had a successful convention in Arlington in 2016 even though it had only been 3 years since the previous convention in Irving. Mike, John and the entire committee should be commended for stepping up when the other divisions dropped the ball. I expect that it won't be long before only Houston and DFW host conventions every other year. We are fortunate to have a great working relationship with Division 3.

After the 2016 convention in Arlington I suspended division meetings because of poor attendance and nobody would help organize them. When meetings were held at the Texas Western, we had a good turnout of club members, but when they were held anywhere else, only a handful of people attended.

The Division continues to be active in the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs. We continue to give at least four clinics at each show to promote the education of the general public about the hobby. Also, this is a great way to reach out to new members. Division 3 has stepped up to run the booth and our division is happy to help supply manpower.

After 12 years on the board, I decided not to run for a 7th term and while I don't believe I ever saw him at a Division 1 meeting, Mike Mackey has stepped up to fill the role. Mike has a lot of support from the Texas Western club in Forrest Hill. Hopefully, the division will be able to retain its autonomy from the club.

With some reluctance, I have agreed to continue representing Division 1 in the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs. Mike assures me that others will be able to help organize clinics, etc., but I will continue to receive contracts from vendors and serve out my term as President of the Council.

Division 2 Director Rod Fredericks reported:

Two significant events dominated my activities this year in the Bayou Division; the disastrous floods in the Baton Rouge area, and total knee replacements of both of my knees.

As to the former, the record flooding in August effected many local model railroaders personally with home flooding, and flooding of the Mid-South Model Railroad Club building. The water in the club did not reach the layout but the 27" submerged everything underneath, including the DCC and signaling systems, storage cabinets containing supplies, tools and off layout engines and rolling stock as well as sheetrock and floor carpet. Since then, club members and a number of non-member model railroaders have pitched in ripping out the flood damaged material, cleaning up the mess and rebuilding the damage. Presently all recovery work has been done except for the signal system and the club hopes to be up and running again in July.

The Greater Baton Rouge Model Railroad Club did not experience flooding, but a number of its members did have flooding of their homes. There was no flooding in the New Orleans area so the Crescent City Model Railroad Club was not damaged.

Personally, recovery from my two knee replacements has kept me from traveling the Bayou Division and visiting other Clubs and modelers as I have done in past years as Division 2 Director. Thankfully, my recovery is nearly complete and both new knees are working fine enough that I'll be at the Convention and back on the road thereafter traveling and visiting division clubs and member layouts.

As far as education in the Division, I did manage to give two clinics at the Crescent City Club. There was a good turnout and along with the members there, we intend to continue with more clinics. Also, I will be presenting a clinic at the Convention in Houston.

Division 3 Director Jerry Hoverson reported that:

Well, after 8 years this will be my last Marker Lamp directors report. Donna Orr will be taking over as the Division 3 Director. The current plans are that I will continue to "MC" the monthly meetings but Donna will now be taking over anything that has to do with the LSR directly.

So, we're still having monthly get meetings at the church in Allen and having fun and learning from each other. For our educational clinics this past quarter;

January: Allan Gartner presented us with a "what went right and what went wrong" lessons learned over the years as he built his HO scale "High 'N' Xiety" and his G scale "Finchfield & Wrensylvania" railroads.

February: Making a Static Grass Applicator was presented by Craig Tribuzi. This was based on a clinic given several years ago at one of our meetings. The grass applicator is cheap and easy to build and is a very helpful tool for applying scenery.

March: One of the most requested topics is Weathering and Duane Richardson re-presented his "If it ain't dirty it ain't done" clinic demonstrating several techniques and the philosophies behind making your railroad look real instead of plastic.

While this is my last report there is still lot's more to come in the division so "Keep rolling down the tracks"!

Division 4 Director Peter Kazmir reported:

As always, it has been an exciting and busy several months since our report for the 2017 mid-year meeting.

We had two Division meetups in March and May. At the March meetup, Peter Bryan gave an excellent presentation on the Comanche and Indian Gap railroad. Afterwards, we toured John Hanne's HO Scale layout, Santa Fe Memories. At the May meetup, Peter Kazmir gave a clinic on Signals.

Pictures and detailed recaps from each meetup, as well as pictures and information about these and other layouts across our Division, are posted on our website, centexnmra.org. The site also hosts a discussion board open to the public.

Our next meeting will be July 8 at the Austin Northwest Recreation Center. Details and directions are available at <http://centexnmra.org/meeting.html>.

The highlight of this period, however, was the Austin Area Train Show, which was hosted by the Division on May 6 and 7. This was the first train show in Austin since 2015, and it was a great success. The show exceeded expectations in every aspect and received very positive feedback from exhibitors. There were five operating layouts at the show from all of the Austin area clubs and a home layout tour. There were also several clinics on topics ranging from track laying to DCC to making trees. We also signed up several new NMRA members! Plans are already underway for the 2018 AATS. Full details will be available in the next Marker Lamp.

Next up for the Division will be our yearly NMRA Meet this fall. The format will change slightly with a greater emphasis on clinics and the contest, and the meet will be open to non-NMRA members as well. Details will be posted on our web site shortly.

We hope to see everyone at the LSR convention in Houston! Have a great summer!

Division 5 Director Dave Lamberts reported:

Do to health issues and other extenuating circumstances, this report has been abbreviated to all is continuing well in Division 5.

Division 6 Kevin Bergeman reported:

South Texas Division (Division 6) assets are \$124 in cash held by the Division Director.

No Division events were held in the past 6 months

A Division Summer 2017 Meet and Fall 2017 Meet are in-planning.

News-worthy for the South Texas Division is the permanent loss of 2 Model Train Shows in the San Antonio Metro area:

- SAMRA's Annual Summer Family Train Show (usually held late in July) has been permanently canceled
- AMRE's Annual Fall Train Show (usually held in early October) has been permanently canceled

The San Antonio/New Braunfels metro areas is currently hosting just 3 model train shows

- SAMRA Annual Jamboree & Train Show (late January)
- NBHRMS Annual Train Show Jamboree (early April)
- NBHRMS Annual Fall Train Show (late October)

Division 7 Director Don Kimmell reported: Membership has held fairly steady.

It has been a quiet previous 5 months. With the demise of the Longview Show and the rescheduling of both the Jefferson and Tyler shows to late May there has been no major activity in the Division.

I have planned to share a booth, with Operation Lifesaver, at the Jefferson Show in late May. Due to scheduling issues-the Tyler Show is the same weekend, I will not be there in Tyler.

I have done two (2) Boy Scout presentations, one in Minden, the other in Junction City, Arkansas (which "straddles" the state line, but only has an Arkansas address). A Scout Master from West Monroe has contacted me to visit with them in mid-June.

Division 8 Director Jim Lemmond reported:

Monthly clinics

Division 8 began 2017, with clinics featuring tree building and track laying. Ray Byer and Jim Lemmond presented the clinic featuring tree making. Ray Byer in April gave a clinic on track laying and building turnouts. A new feature added this year to the Division 8 Clinic series is the donation of gift certificates by G and G Model Shop and Papa Ben's Train Place. The Division is most appreciative of these two businesses' generosity. A schedule of the 2017 Division 8 Clinics may be found at <http://texasgulfdivision.org/clinics.html>.

Division 8 Web Site

A new Events page has been added to our website. We are collecting events calendars from as many model railroad clubs in, around or near the LSR area to make available the many railroad activities throughout the year. If your club would like to be included, please email a copy of your events with date, time and location to: jimlem@comcast.net.

San Jacinto Model Railroad Club Show

The SanJac Club held another successful train show this past February in Stafford, Texas. Many thanks to Steve Sandifer and his crew for producing a well-attended show. The Division 8 booth was by with Dallas area guests, Ken Kiser and Jeff Palmer. They were great in helping Division 8 acquire seventeen new members for the LSR and the NMRA. Many thanks to Ken and Jeff. The Division 8 booth was manned by local members Leslie Eaton, MMR, Loren Neufeld, MMR, Chuck Lind, MMR, Ray Byer, Laurie Lind, Janice Lemmond, and Jim Lemmond. Many thanks to Alan Perlman, owner of Papa Ben's Train Place, for providing gift certificates to all new NMRA members.

Bayou City Limited, LSR Convention 2017

Planning is well underway for this event to be held in Houston, June 7 – 10, 2017. The website is fully operational for

registration, special tours, and events. Go to: <http://bayoucitylimited.org/>

The event is chaired by Robert Ashcraft and Randal Wilson. The Convention Raffle will have many items (brass, models and railroad items) available. All items were donated by a closed hobby shop to the convention. The raffle will include an Austin Steam Train Association \$200 Gift Certificate for a ride on the Austin Steam Train at Cedar Park, Texas.

New Lone Star Region President

Congratulations to Chuck Lind, MMR on his recent election to the office of President of the Lone Star Region of the NMRA. Chuck is a member of the Division 8 Board and a member of the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club. Chuck will take office during the LSR Convention in June 2017. Thanks to Steve Barkley for his service as the outgoing President of the LSR.

Director-At-Large Marc LaChey reported:

In preparation for this report, I went back and reviewed what I had written for the Winter Board meeting. Clearly my report was more an editorial when compared to the activity reports submitted by the various Division leaders. It made me wonder, what activities can I report on. None really. So I will exercise my "at large" position to continue to write about what is on my mind.

Last time I wrote about the expectations and format of our past LSR Conventions. I also wrote asking if it was time to consider changes. So I want to pick up where I left off and continue my thoughts about changing our regional convention format.

First, I think it is time to change the duration of our convention. We are all busy and planning to arrive for a convention on Wednesday evening and staying through Sunday morning seems like a long time. Perhaps it is time we started our conventions on a Thursday evening?

Next, given that we have a duty to educate folks as a part of our 501C3 tax status, perhaps we need to emphasize clinics? Perhaps we should try to run clinics on Thursday evening and all day Friday? And I'm thinking that we try to produce at least six clinics on Thursday evening, and at least twelve if not fifteen clinics on Friday.

Notice, I said nothing about layout tours on Friday. So my plan is to schedule Saturday as "layout tour" day. I see this benefiting layout owners as they only have to be open one day of the convention. And it should benefit layout tourists by limiting their fight with traffic to a Saturday. So no clinics on Saturday, just layout tours!

Now, if the local host committee can arrange a visit to a local train attraction, that can be done on either Friday or Saturday.

Then, we have our banquet, a brief annual meeting and a brief awards presentation on Saturday evening. If it were me, I'd do away with the banquet. But, I know from my own negotiations with hotels that paying them with a food/beverage event makes the convention a more attractive and likely impacts our room rates. So I concede to have the banquet as it saves us costs elsewhere. Besides, we all have to eat don't we?

So there you go.....a reduced schedule that is focused on "education". And that facilitates time to visit with friends. And best of all, no fighting traffic on a normal workday! So what do you think? Is it time to make a change?

Director-At-Large Blake Bogs reported:

It has been a productive 6 months since last reporting.

Marker Lamp:

I wrote two editorials and one article. They were published in the last two issues. Please see the Marker Lamp for the articles.

Nomination Committee:

The election was conducted during March. The results and votes are listed in my Nomination Report. The next election will be held in 2018, unless a constitution change election is needed.

LSR Brochure:

Work continues on the LSR brochure. More changes have been made since I last presented them to the board. I hope to have them printed before the LSR Convention in June.

LSR Convention:

My layout along with my Dad's layout will be open during the Layout Tours. I also plan to help run other layouts during the convention.

Director-At-Large Riley Triggs reported:

Members of the CenTex Division have formed a new 100% NMRA club, the Austin Model Railway Society with the intent on being a 501 (c) 3 organization with the mission to educate the public about railroad activities in general and specifically the history of the railroads in around Central Texas. Bylaws have been adopted, membership dues set and paid, and officers elected. I will be serving as President alongside Secretary George Zapalac, Treasurer Terry Nathan and Vice President of Operations Peter Kazmir.

Our first activity is to build a modular layout based on Austin, Round Rock and Taylor. We have created a module standard that is being produced by David Petersen of Masterpiece Modules in Austin that allows for prototype operations and train show display running. <http://www.masterpiecemodules.com/contact.php>

The Austin Area Train Show was revived this year for the first weekend in May. It was well-attended and plans are already underway for next year's show.

Department Reports

Achievement Chair Duane Richardson reported:

Below are the AP Certificates Awarded since last year's convention:

Ken Mason - Golden Spike
Pete Leach - Prototype Modeler
Pete Leach - Cars

Roy Stockard - Scenery
Marc LaChey - Scenery
Jeff Palmer - Official
Joseph Sorensen - Structures
Steve Jacobs - Golden Spike
Mike Mackey - Structures

I have just gotten paperwork from Don Hand and I processing it now.

Contest Chair Loren Neufeld reported:

Since the Annual Convention is yet to happen, the contest report will be a short one.

Supplies for the upcoming convention have been purchased or ordered. The ribbons have been purchased as well as the wood for the plaques. Plastic for the plaques have been ordered from Casey and Cody and will be delivered to the convention. Since the Bob Clarke award was given out last year a new plaque has been ordered.

Special contest for this year will be "Outhouse" - any size, any scale, any category - structure, diorama, rolling stock, bridge (??), whatever.

The theme for Arts & Crafts is "Bayou".

Since I was elected President I will be giving up my duties as Contest Co-chair and Loren Neufeld will continue as Contest Chair. This doesn't mean that I will not be helping Loren in the contest room.

Convention Chair Marc LaChey was just appointed - No Report

Historian Chair Jim Long – No Report.

Nominating Chair Blake Bogs reported:

We had 124 votes. This was made up of 6 ballots via mail and 118 online votes.

This is compared to the 2013 election (112 votes), 2014 election (around 120 votes), 2014 constitution change (141 votes), 2015 election (107 votes), 2015 constitution change election (91 votes), and 2016 election (98 votes).

President: Winner- Chuck Lind

Treasurer: Winner- Gert 'Jim' Muller aka Speed

Division 1 Director: Mike Mackey

Division 3: Winner- Donna Orr

Division 5: Winner- David Lambert

Division 7: Winner- Don Kimmel

Division 2, 4, 6, 8, Secretary, Vice President and Directors at Large---Running on 2018 Ballot

Nomination Period will close December 1, 2017.

Non-Rail Virginia Feritag not present – No Report.

Publications Chair Riley Triggs reported:

Report of year's activities

The emphasis continues to be on the regular column contributors providing a strong base of material. Gert "Speed" Muller, Blake Bogs, Peter Kazmir and Duane Richardson are doing a tremendous job at producing interesting, informative and educational material for our membership.

I would like to bring focus on featuring layouts of region members, as well as contest and AP recognition. The contest and AP recognition have had an increased presence in the ML, and the interest in layout features is growing. I will need to take a more active role in producing the layout content.

Metrics

Jeff Palmer has provided some metrics for the consumption of the Marker Lamp. He indicates that 65% of 1100 members download the Marker Lamp from the email he sends out at publication time. Of that total, 53.4% download during the initial announcement and another 10.7% over the balance of the month.

Areas to address

Advertising in Pike and Dealer ads still need attention. There has been some interest in upgrading ads to color, but no new pike nor dealers are participating. There has been no particular effort to acquire new ads this year, but this is an ongoing situation.

Long term projects update

Major projects are on hold to gather time and resources to accomplish them.

Website Chair Jeff Palmer reported that:

Since moving to the new website and hosting service along with using archive.org to maintain our downloadable material, the security for the website has been maintained at a very high level. While the event logs shows a number of unauthorized attempts to logon to the site, none have succeeded.

The election was held on the www.geekwithtrains.com website; a website donated for LSR use by Chris Atkins. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chris for allowing the LSR to use the site. The election was held for the month of March and we had over 120 LSR members participate. I am hoping that Chris will allow us to use the site again for next year's election.

As to the Officer's Page, the security methodology has changed on how to secure site content, and I'm still in the process of learning how to work with the new approach. Not wanting to rock the boat so to speak, I have done very little to move this process forward. After all of the issues late last year, I just wanted stability. For those of you who want to view the Officer's Page, use the following URL - <http://www.lonestarregion.com/node/7>. Please remember, right now security is by obscurity or the general lack of availability of the material. No logon required. Don't share.

At present, I'm busy working with the 2017 Convention Committee pumping out MailChimp messages to the LSR membership, advertising the upcoming convention. Also busy making reports, motions and other information available online.

Youth Chair, Jim Lemmond was just appointed – No Report.

Education Chair, Bob Barnett reports:

So far 2017 has been a busy year for presentations around the LSR.

In the Gulf Coast area we have the following clinics (Presentations):

Planned for the upcoming Lone Star Region Convention:

1. Forestry 101 -Tree Building Clinic – Steve Nelson: Steve Nelson models the MKT in the Booneville, Missouri area. His layout includes some of the most realistic old oaks ever modeled. Steve has put together a comprehensive clinic on modeling trees using a variety of techniques and materials along with an excellent handout. Steve hails from Cedar Creek near Austin and is our western-most forestry expert presenting tree clinic at the 2017 LSR.
2. Forestry 201 - Trees for the High Country – Rod Fredericks – Rod models the narrow gauge in Colorado and has assembled an excellent presentation on modeling the spruce, firs and aspens common to that region. Rod hails from Baton Rouge and is our eastern-most tree expert (who models the trees of the West).
3. Norma Brignac - Painting Backdrops: HANDS ON CLINIC. Norma is a local artist with a gift for teaching. She has given these hands on clinics several times, with the results being some modelers leave the clinic as talented painters. Each hands on participant will be given a small canvas (actually blue painted foam board) and loaned the brushes and paint to complete a small back drop painting during the clinic.
4. Pete Leach – Backdrop Painting: Pete will show you how some simple back drop additions can enhance the appearance of your railroad. With a series of before and after shots Pete will demonstrate how the depth and overall quality of a scene can be improved as demonstrated on his Maine 2-footer railroad.
5. George Werner – 70 Years of Rail-fanning around Houston: Noted Texas Rail Historian and Houstonian George Werner will present favorite shots from the Forties, Fifties and Sixties taken by George of the Houston and Gulf Coast rail scene. Many of George's photographs have found their way into railroad publication over the last several years. This is an opportunity to see vintage and rare photographs with commentary from the photographer.
6. Al Partlow – Houston Railroads – Post War to Present: This presentation includes a detailed look at the railroads

that served Houston from the years following World War II to present times. Photos of railroad action in the Houston area from numerous photographers and collections include the Santa Fe, Burlington Northern, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Missouri Pacific, Missouri Kansas & Texas, Fort Worth & Denver, Rock Island, Texas & New Orleans/Southern Pacific, Union Pacific, Kansas City Southern, Houston Belt & Terminal and the Port Terminal railroads.

7. David Currey – Operation on the Brownie in the late 1970's early 1980's: Dave was a brakeman running on the Brownie in the late MoPac/early UP era. He gives a first-hand account of operating on the line south of Houston where many of the nation's largest chemical plants are located. He will discuss interchange with the various lines that crossed the Brownie in the Corpus Christi/ Port Aransas area.

8. Steve Sandifer - T&P Steam in the 1940's: the Photography of William Davis Sandifer: Bill Sandifer was a T&P fan all of his life (1925-2005). His best childhood friend was Ed Robinson whose photos of the T&P have often been published, but Sandifer kept his photos for private use. Steve Sandifer, MMR, will show a collection of never-before-seen photos of T&P steam shot primarily around Marshall, Texarkana, Shreveport, and Bunkie.

9. Tom Marsh – A Railfan Flashback: Flashback to railfanning in the '70s, '80s and '90s with this old-fashioned, pre-digital age Kodak Carousel slide show. We'll see action and roster shots capturing the spirit of the Santa Fe, Southern Pacific, Katy, MoPac, Rock Island, early Amtrak and more. Experience it all: fading Ektachromes, brilliant Kodachromes, cheap camera lenses, off-brand processing and if we're lucky, a slide tray jam or two. Most of these slides have not seen a projector bulb for 25 years or more (some not ever), so hang on for a nostalgia rush!

10. Al Partlow - Modeling the T&NO Hearne Sub – An Update: The Texas & New Orleans Hearne Sub is a 20'x 38' HO scale model railroad that depicts operations on the T&NO Dallas and Austin Divisions in the early 1950s. The railroad includes the major terminal at Houston, including Houston Grand Central Station, as well as the towns of Hockley, Hempstead, Navasota and Hearne. A major classification yard is featured at Hearne. The Austin Sub leaves the main-line at Hempstead for Austin and the Texas Hill Country. Equipment includes both steam and first generation diesels, typical passenger consists, and era specific freight cars and cabooses. Signature structures include the unique Hearne Passenger Depot, the Hempstead Depot and the large rice dryer at Hockley.

11. Chuck Lind, MMR - Logging and Sawmill Operations in East Texas and Louisiana - This will be a power point presentation showing logging and sawmill operations using prototype photos as a reference and then showing how to model these operations. It will start with the timber harvesting and the variety of ways the logs were loaded brought to the sawmill using both wagons and the railroads. Various types of mill operations will be covered using both husk and band saws. Planer mills and final shipping will complete the presentation. Will cover the period from 1900 to 1940's.

12. Phil Stewart –Louisiana Plantation Railroads 1895-1970 – Seventy Five Years along the Sugar Cane Route: Phil will present over 100 vintage photos of narrow gauge locomotives and rolling stock that operated on the 150 plantations that utilized railroads in the early 20th Century. He will discuss the history, operations, scenery, and structures of the Louisiana sugar country that extend from Lafayette to New Orleans along the Mississippi.

13. Greg Johnson – Modeling Industrial Parks and Districts of the Houston area: Greg will discuss the operation and modeling of Houston area industrial districts with particular emphasis on the Santa Fe Industrial District along Mykawa Road. Greg is meticulous in his research and planning and has built several excellent layouts. Come see the latest of his projects.

14. Steve Sandifer – Livestock Handling on the Santa Fe: Steve has done extensive research on the handling of livestock on the railroads in general and the Santa Fe in particular. He is currently in the process of writing a book on the subject and will share some of the knowledge gained in his quest to document this now-fading part of our southwestern railroad heritage.

15. Bob Barnett – Modeling the Cotton Industry in Texas: Houston was founded as the head of Navigation on Buffalo Bayou as a cotton port. Galveston was the second largest cotton port in the South. Before the Spindletop gusher, Cotton was Houston's game. Bob will discuss the cotton industry in Texas from planting, harvest, ginning, the gin building, compresses, shipping to the ports and overseas shipping.

16. Greg Johnson - Designing your own laser-engraved structures: Greg once built a large industrial layout featuring steel mills, foundries and heavy smoke stack industries. Come see his latest efforts at modeling industries more common in the industrial south west.

17. Dane Richardson, MMR – Modeling Structures: MMR Duane Richardson has presented dozens of clinics covering

techniques for modeling structures. An expert modeler and popular clinician around the LSR and the Narrow Gauge Conventions, come learn from a veteran builder.

Presented at the 2017 Greater Houston Train Show Sponsored by the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club:

1. Steve Barkley- Model Railroad Signaling: A presentation on model railroad signaling that covers the types of signaling used on the prototype, including ABS and CTC, as well as interlocking signals. He will show how you can simulate the prototype's signal systems on your model railroad to give it that extra touch of realism.
2. Tom Palmer- A Houston Dirt Track Railroad: A presentation on the Texas Western—a review of a Houston area short-lived railroad. Information presented is from city, county and state historical archives.
3. Norma Brignac- "Hands On" Scenery Backdrop Painting: A hands-on clinic where a number of participants from the audience will be able to learn and utilize the techniques necessary to create realistic backdrops. From fields to trees, and water to skies, Norma's clinic will cover it all.
4. David A. Petersen - Modeling Railroads on Your Computer - An Introduction to Virtual Modeling": Virtual modeling allows you to create a complete railroad on your computer with highly detailed scenery, structures and rolling stock—everything you need to have a fully operational railroad including multi-user operating sessions. David will explore Trainz software and the possibilities this modeling medium offers the model railroader.
5. Pete Leach - "Easy Backdrop Painting": Pete will demonstrate how he quickly paints visually effective backdrops using a minimum of colors on the palette. He explains how he uses various techniques and how it visually affects the viewer. His methods are great for creating background hills and mountains, as well as the fields in the valleys. The way he creates buildings and other structures on the backdrop is truly eye opening.
6. Al Partlow - "Houston Railroads - Postwar to Present": Al's presentation will include photos of Houston area railroading from the Post World War II Era to the present, and from a number of different photographers.

Lone Star Region Division 8 Meetings (To be added during the Calendar Year)

Lone Star Region Division 1 Meetings (To be added during the Calendar Year)

Lone Star Region Division 3 Meetings (To be added during the Calendar Year)

Events Chair, Bill Dryden reports:

We are gaining ground as more folks are sending in notices for up-coming events, though I am still getting some notices few days or so after I have submitted the column. There have been several folks who have called, following up with e-mails with more details.

Anyone having events to be published, please send me the details:

bdr149@airmail.net

A reminder to all:

Please consider our deadlines for submittals and publications to allow adequate lead time to correctly announce your event – Column submission deadlines are the 15th of January, April, July and October; publication of the Marker Lamp is the middle of the following month.

Membership Chair, open position – No Report.

Photography, Dave Lamberts – No Report.

Parliamentarian, Ray Byer just appointed – No Report.

OLD BUSINESS

Donna Orr provided a budget report, Ray Byer provided a motion and seconded by Duane Richardson to approve the budget as submitted - 2017-06-07 LSR Motion 4, passed.

Donna reported that the audit was done by Bob Barnett and Gert Muller. The LSR books balanced. 2017-06-07 LSR Motion 5, passed, to accept the audit results.

Donna opened the discussion on "Division Treasurers" by stating that this was a recommendation, not a requirement. She then pointed out that several divisions chose to leave their distributed funds in the LSR account as noted in the Treasurer's Report. There was a question about making the Division Treasurer an LSR position. It was pointed out that if the decision was made to do that, it would require a constitutional change and a membership vote. It was also noted that since the LSR is a 501(3) the accounts would have to be open to the public and to LSR supervision and reporting. The consensus of the discussion was to leave the Division Treasurer's position at the division level and the position is a suggestion not a requirement.

During the discussion it was pointed out that some divisions were having difficulty opening bank accounts. It was pointed out that this is NOT an LSR account and the LSR should not be part of the account name. No LSR officers are authorized to open divisional accounts as that would require that the LSR Treasurer to oversee the account.

Donna also provided the BOD with the following about travel and other tax tips:

Tips for Taxpayers Who Travel for Charity Work

IRS Summertime Tax Tip 2013-05, July 12, 2013

Do you plan to travel while doing charity work this summer? Some travel expenses may help lower your taxes if you itemize deductions when you file next year. Here are five tax tips the IRS wants you to know about travel while serving a charity.

1. You must volunteer to work for a qualified organization. Ask the charity about its tax-exempt status. You can also visit IRS.gov and use the Select Check tool to see if the group is qualified.
2. You may be able to deduct unreimbursed travel expenses you pay while serving as a volunteer. You can't deduct the value of your time or services.
3. The deduction qualifies only if there is no significant element of personal pleasure, recreation or vacation in the travel. However, the deduction will qualify even if you enjoy the trip.
4. You can deduct your travel expenses if your work is real and substantial throughout the trip. You can't deduct expenses if you only have nominal duties or do not have any duties for significant parts of the trip.
5. Deductible travel expenses may include:
 - Air, rail and bus transportation
 - Car expenses
 - Lodging costs
 - The cost of meals
 - Taxi fares or other transportation costs between the airport or station and your hotelTo learn more see Publication 526, Charitable Contributions. The booklet is available at IRS.gov or by calling 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676).

NEW BUSINESS

Steve Barkley opened the new business portion of the annual meeting with the Ratification of Election and Recognition of new Officers. With their presentation and acceptance, motion designated as 2017-06-07 LSR Motion 2 passed. The new officers are:

President: Chuck Lind
Treasurer: Gert 'Jim' Muller aka Speed
Division 1 Director: Mike Mackey
Division 3 Director: Donna Orr
Division 5 Director: David Lambert
Division 7 Director: Don Kimmel

Chuck Lind's first order of business was to ask for the ratification of the new chair positions (motion designated as 2017-06-07 LSR Motion 6 passed) for:

Convention Chair – Marc LaChey
Youth Chair – Jim Lemmond
Parliamentarian – Ray Byer
Loren Neufeld – Contest Chair

Marc LaChey made a presentation about the LSR co-sponsoring the Sn3 Symposium in Garland, TX. April 5 to April 7, 2018. Rod Frederson provided the motion and seconded by Jim Lemmond. Motion 2017-06-07 LSR Motion 3 passed. Everyone in the LSR is encouraged to attend. To register go to: <http://2018sn3symposium.com/>

Jim Lemmond opened a brief discussion about Youth Awards and the need for the divisions to step up. The one Youth Award this year went to Nathan Lind of Division 8.
Jim would like to see a Youth Award from each division in the future.

Blake Bogs reminded the BOD of the next election of Officer's – Vice President, Secretary, Division 2, 4, 6, 8 Directors, and At-Large Directors 1, 2, 3. The cut-off date for submitting profiles and getting on the ballot is December 1, 2017.

Marc LaChey opened a discussion on future conventions. He introduced some ideas about future conventions including those made to him by Mike Mackey, the Division 1 Director. A motion was made to form a convention committee to study some of the ideas and explore other opportunities as it relates to future conventions but the LSR By-Laws defines the Regional Convention Committee to consist of the LSR President, LSR Vice-President, Treasurer, and Regional Convention Chairman. There will be others added to this committee as needed (Article V Section 5).

Tom Marsh, the 2017 Convention Treasurer, updated the board on the financial status as of the start of the convention. He thought the convention was going to break even.

Riley Triggs, presented a presentation for the 2018 LSR Convention. The Convention will be held in Round Rock, TX. June 20-24, 2018. The motion to accept this proposal was made by Marc LaChey, and seconded by Jeff Palmer; Motion 2017-06-07 LSR Motion 9, and passed. Well done Riley. The presentation was a hit.

Jeff Palmer approached the board with an issue concerning Joseph Sorenson and entering a contest model. After discussing Joseph's handicap and physical situation, the BOD allowed Joseph to enter his model.

Chuck Lind closed the meeting thanking everyone for their participation and expressed how he was looking forward to working with everyone on the BOD.

Chuck Lind closed the meeting at 4:10 PM

Director Reports



Cowcatcher Division 1
by Mike Mackey
director@cowcatcherdivision.org
cowcatcherdivision.com

See Board Meeting minutes for report



Of course there are other activities at the monthly meetings, with our "deal or dud", show and tell , Duane's tips and tricks, judging available for AP certificates, and question and answers.



Bayou Division 2
by Rod Fredericks
fredericks.rod@gmail.com
225-939-0187

See Board Meeting minutes for report

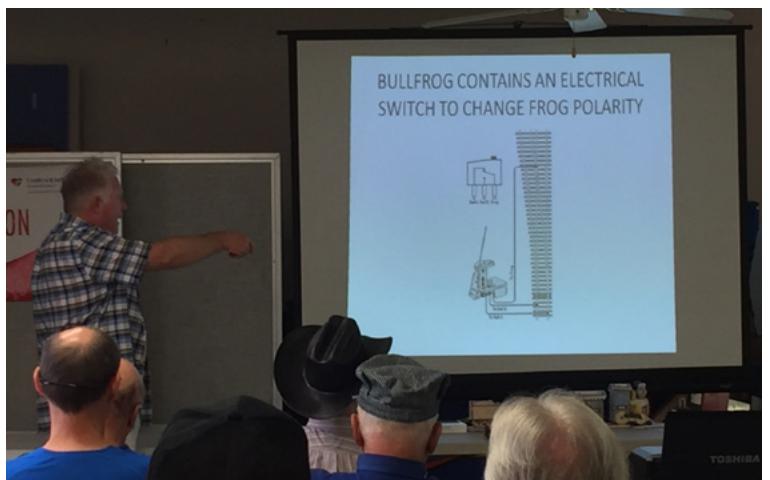
For instance, in April, Charles Goodrich presented a clinic on "Painting Locomotives". With some great tips and tricks. Then in May Thomas Stephens presented "A Dcc Overview". Since we survey our members for their interest in different areas, this was one of our most asked for topics.

On to June, Bill Huebner showed us how to use the "bullfrog" frog juicers (a small electronic circuit that will automatically switch polarity of the frog in a turnout). And in July, Thomas Stephens was back demonstrating how to program you DCC locomotive using JMRI.



North East Texas Division 3
by Donna Orr
dlo-rls@sbcglobal.net
972-342-8598

Well, here I go, continuing on as Division 3 Director. One thing I can tell you about our division is that the monthly meetings are great. Years ago, after joining NMRA at a Plano Train Show, I've noticed that our monthly meetings have kept everyone's interest, as you can tell by the number of members that attend every month.



A picture is worth a thousand words. So with the pictures I included, I just gave you a synopsis of this quarters monthly meetings, clinics, and saved you from reading 8,000 words. See ya'll next quarter.



CenTex Division 4
by Peter Kazmir
pakazmir@gmail.com
CenTexNMRA.org

Things are busy in Central Texas! We continue to hold regular Division meetups. At the July meetup, Joel Davidson presented an excellent clinic on LED lights and their use in model railroading. Afterwards, we visited Tom Foreman's fantastic HO scale Brushy Creek & Santa Fe layout.

Pictures and detailed recaps from each meetup, as well as pictures and information about these and other layouts across our Division, are posted on our website, centexnmra.org. The site also hosts a discussion board open to the public.

Our next meetup will be September 9 at the Austin Northwest Recreation Center. Details and directions are available at <http://centexnmra.org/meeting.html>.

We are also busy at work planning for upcoming events, including the Austin Area Train Show, which will return to the Williamson County Expo Center on May 5 and 6, 2018. Check out our ad in this issue of the Marker Lamp or <https://austin-railway.org/trainshow.html> for details.

However, our primary focus at the moment is planning for the next Lone Star Region NMRA Convention, which will return to the Austin area June 13-17, 2018, at the Wingate Round Rock Hotel and Conference Center. We are bringing in some exciting guests, a slew of interesting clinics, and awesome off-site events just like we have in the past. Details will be coming soon to an inbox near you; until then, save the dates!

Finally, don't forget about the 35th Annual Temple Train Show, hosted by CentraMOD at the Frank Mayborn Civic and Convention Center, September 16-17. It's always a great show for everyone, and we hope to see you there!



Division 5
by Dave Lamberts
DavidWL1944@aol.com
806.792.7244

See Board Meeting minutes for report



Division 6
by Kevin Bergeman
kevin.bergeman@gmail.com
210.488.4370

See Board Meeting minutes for report



Division 7
by Don Kimmell
elf4kcs@mac.com
318.798.7718

See Board Meeting minutes for report



Texas Gulf Division 8
by Jim Lemond
jimlem@verzion.net

In Memory of Jim Long

It is with great sadness we report the passing of Jim Long, LSR Historian, Board Member and San Jacinto Model Railroad Club member. An excerpt from the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club's August Derail,

Very sad news. The condolences of the NMRA Family to Jim's family and many friends. A true loss for us all.
-Charlie Getz, NMRA President

Lone Star Region Convention – Houston

Thank you to all LSR Members attending the LSR Convention in Houston, June 7th. – 10th. The Convention was well received by all attendees. The various activities were well attended. The Convention Door Prizes were outstanding and of high quality. Much credit goes to all that helped make this a successful LSR. Many thanks to Robert Ashcraft and Randall

Wilson for chairing this event on short notice.
Congratulations to Chuck Lind, MMR, for becoming President of the LSR and the other new Board Members.

The World's Greatest Hobby show

The World's Greatest Hobby show is coming to Houston on February 3rd. and 4th., 2018 at NRG Arena. The NMRA will have a booth at the show. We are asking local NMRA members to staff the booth. Helping with the booth will grant you free admission to the event.

If interested, contact:

Ray Byer, Division 8 President - division8pres@yahoo.com
Jim Lemmond, Division 8 LSR Board Member – jimlem@comcast.net Please include your email address and phone number.

The Greater Houston Train Show

The Greater Houston Train Show, sponsored by the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, is scheduled for February 17, 2018. The location for the train show is the Stafford Centre in Stafford, Texas off US Highway 59 on the Southwest side of Houston.

The show starts at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 17, 2018. The show includes clinics, vendors and items of interest for all ages.

Lone Star Region 2017 Youth Award

Calling all Division 8 members, we need nominations for the 2018 LSR Youth Award. Any youth 18 years or below living within our Division is eligible for consideration. Send your nominations to Jim Lemmond, jimlem@comcast.net, with the youth's name, age, address and your contact information. I will then send the necessary form to the filled out. The Youth award includes a free one-year membership to the NMRA plus a certificate.

New Events page for the Division 8 web site

The Division 8 web site has a new page devoted to model railroading events occurring within the Lone Star Region and nationally.

<http://texasgulfdivision.org/events.html>

If you or your Division would like to be listed on this page, please send your event, date, time and location to Jim Lemmond: jimlem@comcast.net

Treasurer Report



Treasurer
by Speed Muller
lsrtreasurer@hunatropy.com
469-345-0022

Just a short note before the report, please: It is quite normal for the entity paying your bill to request the original receipts, and if you lost it by some railroad tracks, then it is still your responsibility to document that event and provide sufficient proof for us, the LSR, and the future IRS auditor, to justify why you should get reimbursed and for what amount. There is simply no way we can write a check to anyone based on a voice mail. Thank you.

First Fiscal Quarter of 2017/2018:

Beginning Balances (05/01/2017)	
LSR Checking Account	\$ 29,798.92
Morgan Stanley CD Fund	\$ 9,875.17
Beginning total LSR Net Worth	\$38,879.09

(included in Total LSR Net Worth: Funds for the Bob Clark Award: \$570, Division 2, 5 and 7 Rebate Funds: \$225)

LSR Proceeds

Morgan Stanley CD Fund Interest	\$ 11.56
Morgan Stanley fee error corrected	\$ 150.00
Amazon Smile	\$ 5.00
Marker Lamp Dealer/Pike Ads	\$ 40.00
Total Proceeds	\$ 206.56

LSR Disbursements

Youth Membership Program	\$ 32.00
Election printing and mailing	\$ 86.01
BOD Meeting Expenses	\$ 162.78
NMRA rebates to Divisions	\$ 349.00
Historian Expenses	\$ 38.97
Banking Costs (checks)	\$ 26.00
Memorial Donations	\$ 75.00
Total Disbursements	\$ 769.76
Net Proceeds-Disbursements	\$ -563.20

Ending Balances (7/31/2017)

LSR Checking Accounts Total	\$28,279.16
Morgan Stanley CD Fund	\$10,036.73
Total LSR Net Worth	\$38,315.89



2018

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For more information or for vendor tables contact trainshow@austinrailway.org or visit <https://austinrailway.org/trainshow.html>

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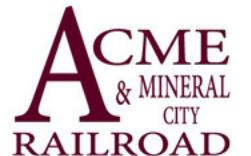


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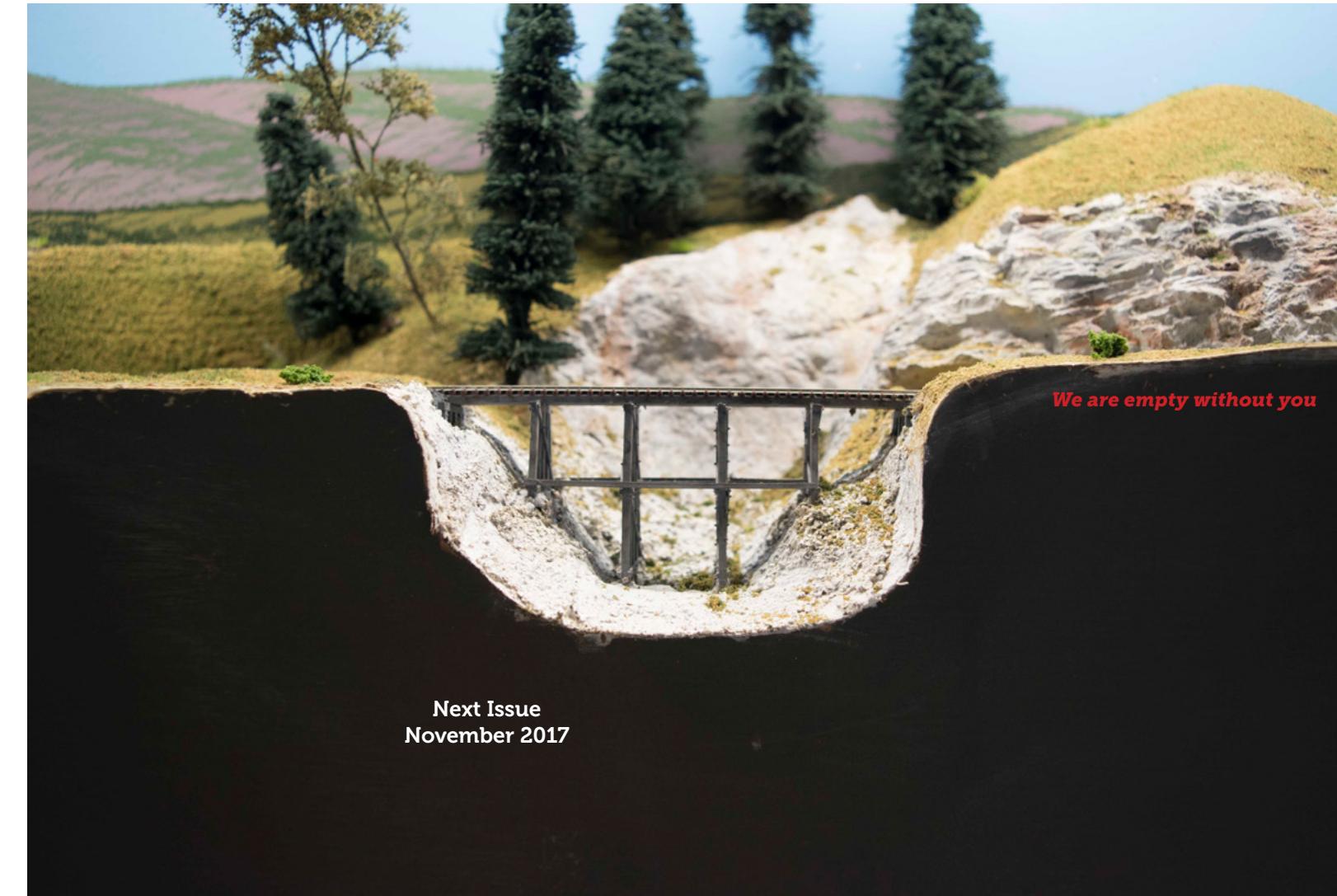
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November 2017

Deadline for
submissions is
October 15



submittals and inquiries | rileytriggs@gmail.com