

THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division

SPRING

2001

President's Message

Our TTOS Division is facing a serious challenge. It could be one of survival. In short, members are not participating. They are not volunteering to head or serve on committees, run for office, or even filling tables with trains for trading purposes. It appears our division has expanded activities over the years without the necessary volunteers to accomplish them putting the burden on the few who are willing and/or the elected officers. Generally these are the same "recycled" few. Perhaps they are unwilling but do not know how to say "no." But maybe now they are saying "no" and you better believe it!

Member participation is, perhaps, the most difficult goal to achieve in any organization, and at the same time, the most important. If the division is providing for the wants and needs of its members, why is member participation and volunteering so difficult to achieve?

The planning committee has been re-established to define and develop priorities and goals for the Division, for the short and long term, thereby giving elected officers some direction and input from the membership. Soon you will be completing a survey. Please complete the survey honestly and return it. Remember, do not favor any answer, or activity, unless you would be willing to volunteer to work on that committee. It is

(Continued next page)

John McLeod and Terry Lee Young opened their layouts to the SVD membership following our meet on February 3. John's layout is about 4 x 12 ft., with a siding extending along a shelf on one wall. Terry's is about 4 x 6 ft. and is cleverly mounted above one end of John's layout. John is a dedicated Flyer 'S' operator and collector, and his pike features many desirable Gilbert operating accessories and cars. Glass-covered display cases filled with Flyer treasures line the walls. Terry Lee's layout boasts a fine-looking mountain and tunnel she crafted.



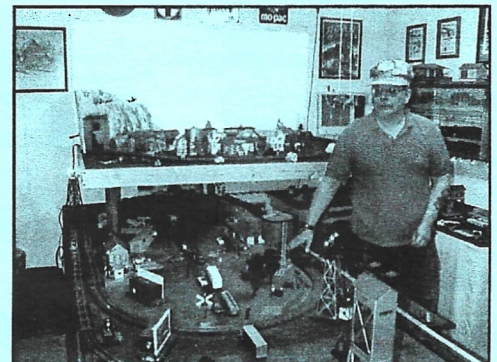
John and Terry Lee proudly show their Flyer collection

John says, "For those who think they can't find a place for a layout because they don't have space, the room ours are in is about 12x15. So any small space can work!" John and Terry Lee thank all who came to visit, and the SVD membership thanks them for their kind hospitality.



Left: John demonstrates one of his many Flyer accessories to Richard Zanotti

Below: John and his Flyer empire



Monthly Layout Tours- "make it happen"

I'm happy to report that the member's monthly layout tours will continue through the new millenium! Our directors are strongly supportive of this program and have asked that I continue scheduling and in general, 'make it happen'. This is a great opportunity for us to showcase our layouts and receive peer recognition along with a sprinkling of constructive comments on our efforts. When I say 'make it happen', that really means YOU make it happen. After all, as an active member, you are the one opening your home to fellow members for a few hours, once a year or so, to show off your efforts and get applauded for them. Remember, to build a layout and never have anyone see it except you is like an actor not getting applause. As I've stated in the past, we don't need a fully finished empire. Layouts, in any stage of construction, better serve the needs of fellow members to learn from your experiences, good and bad. In a sense, by showing your pike you are giving a visual clinic of all you have learned. And believe me, each 'clinic' is different. We learn from them all.

I would like to thank all of our fellow members who participated in last years layout tours and look forward to a full schedule for 2001. Please feel free to see me during any Meet or call me at home about scheduling a fan trip along your Right of Way! (916) 929 4455
- Jack Ahearn

Upcoming layout visits:

March - Bob Effa, Sacramento
April - Pete White, Fair Oaks
May - Jack Hornor, Galt
June - John Freitas, Carmichael
July - To be announced
August - To be announced
September - To be announced
October - no tour - Scottish Rite meet
November - Carl and Kathy Locher, Placerville

President's Message (continued) -

one thing to say "yes, good idea, we should do that" and another to have volunteers to do it.

I want to thank Jerry Azzaro for becoming editor of the Side Track, George Ann Hornor for staying on as membership chair, the members who volunteered to serve on the planning committee, and Norman LaClair for keeping the trains on schedule with the portable layout. Hopefully, we will be reorganized and ready for an election by summer. In the meantime, we need your help.

Don Rosa
Acting pro tem

From the editor . . .

We all owe a debt of gratitude to George Ann Hornor for her years of dedication in producing the Side Track. We wish her a speedy recovery from the surgery which caused her to give up this duty. I know that I have some big shoes to fill, and I am hoping that SVD members will not be shy in contributing stories and articles for publication. You can e-mail me at jerry_azzaro@juno.com, fax 415/334-7061, or phone 415/334-6928. Of course, good old US Mail works too. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

- Jerry

FOR SALE:

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Two interesting articles "lifted" from the Kalmbach Publishing website, www.trains.com. Suggested by John DeHaan

Master photographer O. Winston Link dies

Creativity and technical expertise marked his photographic documentation of railroad history.
by Bill Stephens

Celebrated photographer O. Winston Link – who used his lens, elaborate lighting systems, and imagination to dramatically capture the end of the steam era and a way of life in Norfolk & Western territory in Appalachia four decades ago – died on Jan. 30.

The 86-year-old Link, who was in failing health and had a history of heart problems, died of a heart attack while driving himself to his doctor's office in Mount Kisco, N.Y., said his agent, Thomas H. Garver.

Acclaim for Link's work has grown in recent years, and his photos have been exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Modern Art, as well as in numerous traveling shows. His books, "Steam, Steel & Stars," and "The Last Steam Railroad in America," showcase about 225 of his nighttime images of N&W steam, railroaders, and the region's people.

"It is a wonderful body of work," John Szarkowski, the former photography director of the Museum of Modern Art, once told *The New York Times*. "Nobody else did anything like it."

Link's technical wizardry – some of his photographs required up to a half-mile of wiring for his synchronized flash system – was matched only by his creative genius.

Link's photographs made headlines in the mid-1990s when his former wife, Conchita, stole 1400

prints worth more than \$1 million. She was convicted in 1996 and is currently behind bars.

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Link received a civil engineering degree from Polytechnic University in Brooklyn in 1937. But since there were few engineering jobs available at the time, he joined a public relations firm in Manhattan and went on to become an advertising photographer.

Lionel makes move decision final

Production to be transferred to new Chinese facility by summer.
by Jim Schulz

CHESTERFIELD TOWNSHIP, Mich. – Richard Maddox, president and chief operating officer of Lionel LLC announced Thursday 2/8 that all manufacturing of Lionel products at its Chesterfield, Mich., factory will cease by August and be transferred to China.

Maddox said the decision was based on increased costs of domestic manufacturing, increased competition and continued changes in the marketplace, and was not a reflection of the workforce of the Chesterfield manufacturing operation.

"What would cost a half a million dollars to manufacture here would cost \$50,000 to \$75,000 overseas," Maddox said. "Wellspring (Lionel's parent company) has invested \$20 million over the past three years to keep Lionel competitive in the toy train market. Twelve to 15 percent of yearly sales goes back into tooling."

"This is an experienced and de-

voted workforce. Naturally they're feeling betrayed," said a bitter Dan McCarthy, president of UAW Local 417. "Loyalty cuts both ways. It's a loyal workforce. They didn't deserve this."

McCarthy said the union presented Lionel with options that he claimed could have saved Lionel "millions of dollars, but it wasn't good enough for them." The union's cost-savings suggestions included reducing the workforce at the Chesterfield plant, but "maintaining a core operation here." McCarthy also argued the company is "top-heavy" in management, and reductions there could also have brought savings. But he contended Lionel's plans were already set before Maddox ever brought the news of a possible closing to the union.

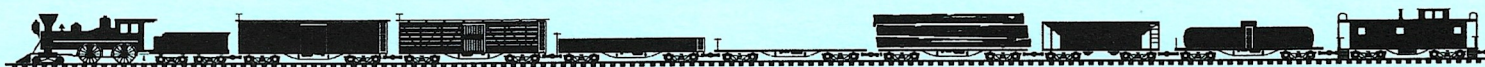
"This has probably been in place, I imagine, since they hired Maddox to take this very course of action," McCarthy said. "They've transformed Lionel from a badly run American company to a badly run oriental company."

"We spent 18 hours a day trying to figure out ways to stay in Michigan," Maddox said. "But it's just not practical to do anything in Michigan."

Maddox could not say what the last item to be produced at the Michigan plant would be, but that phasing out would begin immediately. When asked what would happen to the tooling and molds located at the Michigan plant, Maddox said it is feasible to transport them overseas.

Initial plans are to locate a new Chinese-owned and operated facility in China. Corporate headquarters will remain in Chesterfield.

"This was never a case of management vs. labor," Maddox said. "It's simply a matter of business. We want to insure another 100 years of Lionel trains."



Down the track

March 3: TTOS-SVD, Sierra II Center

March 10: Nor-Cal TCA, Monteria Jr. High School, Oakland

March 10 -11: GWTS, Cow Palace, SF

March 10 -11: Woodland Toy Train Layout Show, County Fair Mall, Woodland

April 7: TTOS-SVD, Sierra II Center

April 21: Nor-Cal TCA, Monteria Jr. High School

May 5: TTOS-SVD, Sierra II Center

May 19 -20: GWTS, Fresno

May 26: Nor-Cal TCA Sac-Sierra Toy Train Meet, Scottish Rite Center, Sacramento



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