



THE SIDE TRACK

SUMMER

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division

2004

President's Message

by Jeff Silvera

I would like to challenge the entire SVD membership to come down and be part of the National Toy Train Operating Society (TTOS) Convention in Fresno August 3 thru 7, being hosted this year by Central California Division. The reason I'm challenging you is that I feel, with it being so close to our division, we should have the most members in attendance at this convention. We are *so close* - you can take Amtrak or just drive down highway 99. It's only a few hours for most of us. I'm looking forward to this Convention. I want to Encourage ALL of you as members to register and be a part of it. Also, don't forget all the great Tours. The Yosemite & Sugar Pine R.R. tour looks to be exciting and there are also tours for spouses while you are busy trying to find that treasure on trading day.

With the election fast approaching, Vice President **Kevin Anderson** has taken on the job of Nomination Chairman. We are looking for candidates for all office positions. If you feel you would like to get involved in the running of this club, please contact Kevin as he will present the candidates to the floor after the summer. Elections will be held in November.

Don't forget, there will be no meeting at Sierra 2 in August as we will all be at the convention. You'll need to register for the convention to be around the Trains! I am hoping our Division will have the best representation, so come down and have fun with us.

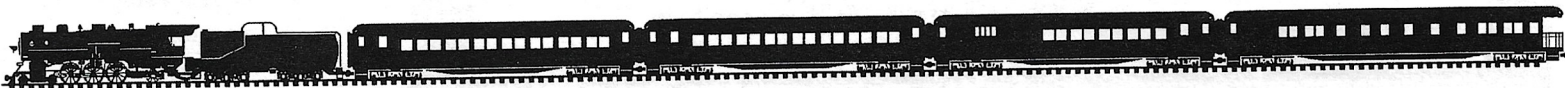
**Have a great summer. We'll see you
down the tracks in Fresno August 3- 7!**

Membership News and Notes

by George Ann Hornor

Let's all welcome our new members, **Ed and Sue Strisar** from Sacramento. Also, new to this area are **Don and Janice Clark**. Don is editor of the *Gold Spike*, the Golden State Division newsletter, and they have recently moved to Folsom. Believe me, Golden State's loss is our gain, but **Marilyn Ricciardi** tells me that they're going to talk him into serving as editor in absentia -- or maybe just foreign correspondent. Anyway, we're looking forward to getting to know both couples.

"At Yosemite's Door in 2004". Yes, that's the slogan of the fast approaching TTOS convention in Fresno. You've all seen the great program our friends in Cen-Cal have put together. So it's time to send in your registration so that they can finalize their plans to ensure that events run smoothly and that everyone has fun.



SVD CLUB ATTIRE by Ron Wong

A survey is being conducted to indicate membership interest in club logo apparel. Items under consideration are:

- **Dark blue polo shirts** for all club occasions
- **White cotton T-shirts** for those hot summer days
- **Orange vests** look great for the Layout Crew
- **Chambray shirts** for that working train crew look
- **Engineer striped caps**
- **Baseball-style caps**

All items include 3-½" diameter embroidered Sacramento Valley Division club logo *except for the T-shirts which will be silk-screened in one color*. So far, interests are leaning towards the polo shirts which could be worn with either slacks or jeans and gives a nice public appearance in all club functions.

Information needed will be your name, quantity, size and items of choice. This will not be a commitment to buy. The information gathered will enable the suppliers to furnish us with a price. Upon presentation it will be subject to the board and the membership for approval before submitting any orders. For further information and/or suggestions contact Ron Wong at (916) 716-3847 or by e-mail: hialoha@hawaii.com Copy of the survey will be available at the June meeting.

Big News About Small Trains!

Submitted by Jack Ahearn, Courtesy of CSRM

Exciting New Exhibit to Open in Sacramento

On Saturday, August 14, the California State Railroad Museum at Old Sacramento State Historic Park will unveil its all-new, 3,300-square-foot Thomas W. Sefton Gallery of Toy Trains. The Gallery will showcase Mr. Sefton's collection of 20th Century toy trains and Buddy L riding toys, considered one of America's most comprehensive toy train collections. Because the collection itself is so extensive in volume, only a portion will be displayed at any one time—allowing for a regularly updated presentation to delight toy train enthusiasts time and again.

The new Thomas W. Sefton Gallery will be organized into six specific themes. In the "Exhibit Introduction," guests will learn that toy trains are part of our culture and our heritage, and an art form. In "Collector's Attic," guests will explore why people collect items, how Thomas W. Sefton went about collecting, and how scarcity and other object criteria impact the value of a collection. In "Toy Trains 101," guests will explore how early "primitive" toy trains evolved into pull toys, then wind-ups, then electric toy trains.

Moving on to "Lionel City," guests will see the toy trains of the 1920s and 1930s highlighted, and how packaging and marketing methods reflected the changing cultural and social outlook of Americans. In the "Operating Layout," visitors will experience the thrill of lights, color and motion. And finally, in "Toy Trains for Everyone," visitors will learn how scale model trains developed as part of the toy train phenomenon, and how toy trains have affected our common, shared culture in America today.

For more information about the Museum and the Thomas W. Sefton Gallery, please visit www.californiastaterailroadmuseum.org. For 24-hour recorded info, call (916) 445-6645.

RIVER CITY TOY TRAIN MEET

Don't forget our annual open-to-the-public meet on Saturday, October 2 at the Scottish Rite Center, 6151 "H" Street, Sacramento. The meet hours are 10AM to 3PM. This is our yearly fund-raiser public meet; therefore the admission is \$5.00 for single admission and \$9.00 for families for both members and non-members. There will not be a meet at the Sierra 2 Center on October 2 since we will be at the Scottish Rite Center.

If you are interested in registering for vendor tables or displaying a layout, please contact SVD President and Meet Chairman **Jeff Silvera** at (916) 481-4694 or Table Registration Chairman **Carl Locher** at (530) 626-0421.

Volunteers needed: As usual, we need members to help with the club layout, security, front-desk staff, assist loading / unloading, and clean up. Please contact **Jeff Silvera** if you can help.

New Hope for older MTH Proto-1 engines

By Jack Hornor

Although I have not done business with the company personally, the Scaled Tin Rail, a QSI service center in Flagstaff, sounds like they have the solution to restoring and saving your old MTH Proto-1 (PS-1) engines at a reasonable cost. Exploring the Internet, I recently found a link to the company. I spoke with Art Boynton, the owner, for about an hour, and he sent me several documents on recovering, maintaining and upgrading older PS-1 engines which were manufactured by MTH before their PS-2 engines came out. If you call Art at (928) 525-0755, he will send you his information and give advice free of charge. He charges \$15 plus shipping both ways to restore a scrambled PS-1 board. An upgraded power supply to prevent future scrambling from dead batteries is another \$15. So, for \$30 you're back in business. You can also send the engine to him for the full service including boards and reinitializing. His fee for this full service is \$35 plus shipping. Here's a chance to get those old PS-1s going again — cheap.

April York Report



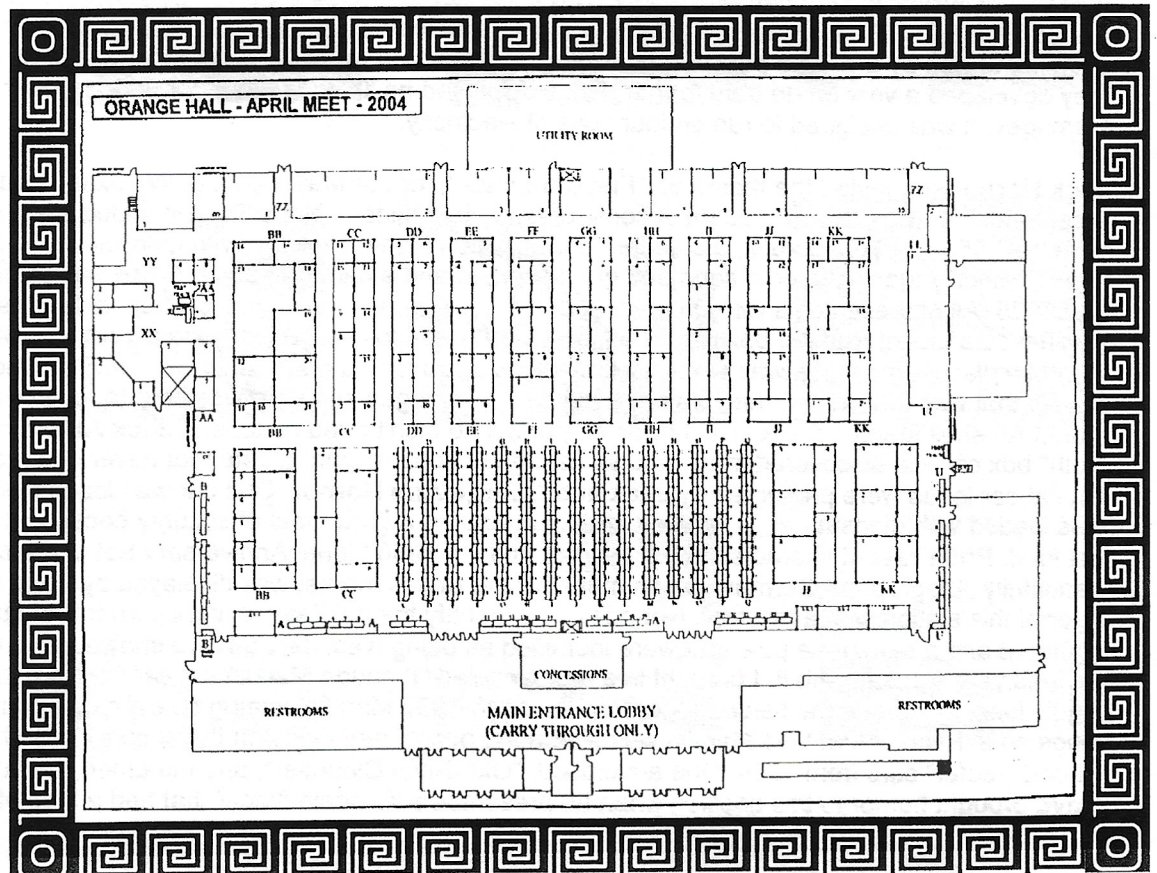
Inclement weather early in the week forced buyers and sellers indoors. Pre-meets at the indoor "Billy Bud", "Holidome" and Reliance Fire Co. were bustling, starting as early as Monday. The skies cleared by Thursday and parking lot sales got into full swing. Outdoor sales at the Best Western on Kenneth Road seems to have attracted many vendors who previously sold at the Billy Bud. It appeared that there were at least twice as many sellers here as in previous meets. The grand "Billy Bud" meets, overflowing onto private lawns across the street, are a thing of the past.

The official meet at the York fairgrounds was well attended with over 16,000 registered. Space in the new Orange Hall was sold out, so the Purple Hall, which had previously been closed, was reopened to accommodate the overflow.

If you are accustomed to renting a car at BWI airport, you should know that the car rental business has been moved to an off-terminal location and you now must get to and from your rental by shuttle bus. Be sure to allow a few extra minutes in your schedule for this. The shuttle service operates on the airport's lower level, and is available at all times.

PUZZLE CORNER

Find your way through the Orange Hall. Start and end at the main entrance lobby. Be sure to visit every table, but don't backtrack or pass any table more than once!



Show and Tell

By Richard Zanotti

The themes for Show & Tell in March were , "Trains and Toy Trains in Movies", and "More Stations and Buildings". **Bill Wilson** brought in a beautiful coal bunker that he made from

a KT kit. **John De Haan** presented a Schoenhut station made for Lionel in 1918. It has lights and is made of press-board. A restored aerodrome was displayed by Pete White. He stressed that the restoration was due to the talents of friends like **Jim Groth**, **Ira Keeler**, and **Clyde Easterly**. We were treated to **Tom Gibson's** collection of European stations. They came from Russia, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and Finland. **Warren Kennedy** showed a nice boxed Hornby clockwork freight set.

Jack Ahearn suggested the theme of "Trains and Toy Trains in the Movies". This was something different than we had done previously and required a lot of creativity. **Rick Wilson** presented the movie, "SILVER STREAK" [1976 Version]. **Jack Ahearn** shared the book, HOLLYWOOD AND THE MOVIES. **Jerry Azzaro** and **Anna Kauffman** told of a movie featuring a toy train, "DARK DELUSION". They were able to take some stills of the movie. They displayed a golf club; it's significance was that in the movie Warner Anderson uses one to smash a toy train in a department store window. **Dean Busik** used more high-tech to tell about the movie, "TWENTIETH CENTURY LIMITED". The movie starred Carol Lombard and John Barrymore. Dean displayed an '0' gauge Dryfus Hudson locomotive to represent the real thing in the movie. He used the Bauer Point Presentation Program to display stage sets from the Broadway play version of the movie on his notebook computer. I told of the 1934 version of "THE SILVER STREAK". I had the Schilling model of the Burlington Zephyr and pictures of the 1933 Chicago World's Fair and Boulder Dam. This represented the race against time in transporting an iron lung to the dam site in order to save the life of the heroine's brother.

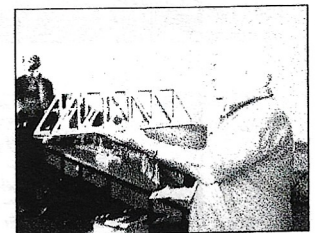
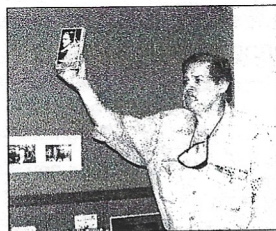
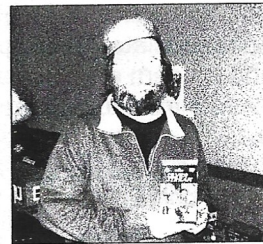
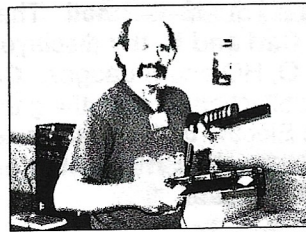
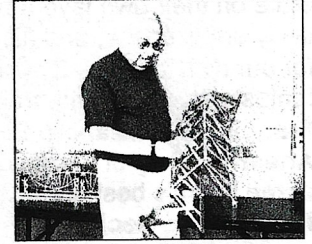
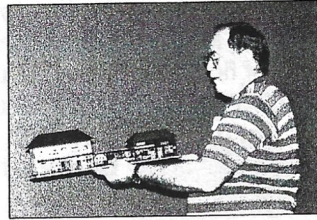
"Bridges" and "Cal-Stewart Finds" were the themes of our April meeting. **Jerry Azzaro** displayed an American Flyer bridge and four bridges made by the Junior Bridge Company. He concluded that the Junior Bridges were made from sheetmetal and coathangers. **Jeff Silvera** found a couple of girder bridges at Cal-Stewart. They were real bargains, he paid five dollars each. Jeff will be giving them to the club layout. **Bill Cloughley** shared an unique curved bridge that he made up of shelf hardware and sheetmetal screws. A diorama was set up by **Chuck Stone**. It was composed of a pristine '0' gauge locomotive on an Ives "Stone" bridge. It was very nice. **Tom Gibson** presented a Junior bridge and a Marx bridge. An interesting Hafner bridge and another by American Bridge were displayed by **Jim Havey**. **Jack Hornor** shared a Lionel bridge. Another Cal-Stewart find was presented by **Pete White**. It was an army train patterned after the Lionel 1917 Army Train. It is composed of a armored locomotive and passenger cars named after famous generals. We were treated to some very interesting bridges displayed by **Clyde Easterly**. They were: an American Flyer bridge, a Bing bridge that had a beautifully lithoed deck and ramps, and a very realistically looking bridge made from an Ives Structiron kit. **Jim Havey** pointed out that Clyde's Bing bridge was very similar to his Hafner bridge, I shared a Carlyle & Finch embossed coal mining locomotive from about 1906. I explained that when this electric locomotive was made most homes did not have electricity. The electricity had to be provided by either batteries or dynamos. I displayed a Carlyle & Finch dynamo that was powered by either a gas or a steam engine. They also made dynamos that could be turned by a turbine powered by a kitchen faucet and one that could be powered by cranking it. Eventually, they developed a very crude transformer. I also displayed an '0' gauge Marklin British type train that was marketed by Gamages. It was designed to run on four volts of electricity.

Jack Hornor suggested the theme of , "Flat Car Loads", for our May meeting. We extended the theme to include "York Meet Finds". **Chuck Stone** brought in some of his recent finds at York. They included a Marx Constellation airplane from the 1950's, a Tonka truck, a standard gauge green Lionel caboos with gold windows, Kenton cast iron horse drawn vehicles that included a sand and gravel wagon and a carriage, and a Gibbs gas station made between 1923 and 1925. All of these items were in pristine condition. **Paul Wells** shared a "Rags to Riches" story with us. He had purchased a Lionel Rutland box car for \$80. It had a green full shield logo with a yellow background. He almost fainted when he discovered that it was worth \$2,000. **Jerry Azzaro** had an American Flyer 'S' gauge 370 "JEEP" diesel locomotive that was functioning mechanically, but had a damaged shell. He was able to replace the damaged shell with a Lionel AF shell found at York. The fit was so perfect he didn't need fasteners. **Jack Ahearn** shared a lithoed "Baby Ruth" box car. He discovered that it had as its date of construction, a date that never occurred, April 31, 1939. Interesting flat car loads were presented by **Jack and George Ann Hornor**. One car was loaded with army Jeeps, another was loaded with dinosaur eggs, and another car required a great deal of security because it was loaded with cans of cat food. **Phil Fravesi** shared some of his York finds: a 1950 Lionel Anniversary Set and a rare Chung King box car. A beautifully lithographed German station made for the British market was displayed by **John McCleod**. The manufacturer of this station was a mystery. Nobody could identify the oak leaves and acorn trademark. John also had a light standard and a telephone pole that were identified as being Ives. **Jeff Silvera** showed us a CD of toy trains sounds. He was very pleased with it. I brought in a four wheeled '1' gauge Marklin flat car from the middle 1930's. It was missing its load. I also had the flatcar page from the 1936-1937 Marklin catalog so everyone could figure out which load belongs on it. Even at that time Marklin was starting to put military loads on these cars. I also had two Bing '1' gauge lithoed "reefer" cars from 1914. One advertised, "Old Dutch Cleanser", and the other, "Swift's Premium Ham". **Mark Boyd** brought humor to this session when he presented a 'G' scale flatcar that had a load of two large crates. When

activated by noise the two crates started rocking and voices saying, "Help! Help! Let me out of here!", came out of them. Everybody started laughing.

I would like to thank everybody who has participated in Show & Tell during three past three months. Members shared some great ideas. and brought in some great things. Some were works of art, some ingenuity, some historical, and some humorous. After all, this is your Show & Tell.

Show and Tell Gallery



Layout Tours

by Jack Hornor

After the March meeting, we visited the home and layout of **Karl and Jeanette Schmidt**. There we were treated to the sight of some of the best restoration projects that I have ever seen, and I'm sure the other

visitors will agree. **Karl's** restored prewar standard and O gauge trains appear as they would have when they were taken out of their boxes many years and many kids ago. The crown jewel of his collection is his operating 3-rail, No. 1-gauge layout, perhaps the only one west of the Mississippi. Thank you, **Karl and Jeanette**, for a great day.

In April, we visited Loomis to see two layouts -- **Bob and Jan Rhodes'** Rail Room and **Eister Mountain**. **Bob** has used his skill and clever artistry to create two outstanding layouts in a normal-sized bedroom. Not wanting to choose between gauges, he encircled the room at eye-level with a classic standard gauge railway, while his post-war and modern trains operate on their own layout below. His unique through-the-wall tunnel into a closet shows how to make the most of a relatively small space, and his imaginative mountain created from an upside-down garden pond liner gave many of us ideas for our own layouts. Thanks, **Bob and Jan**. Then, it was on to **Eister Mountain** where the hugely entertaining layout and fantastic view from the train room made it well worth the challenge of finding our way up the winding road to the home that **Francis and Elizabeth Eister** built themselves a few decades ago. The March 2004 issue of The Bulletin features **Jack Ahearn's** story of this layout with its ceiling-high mountain and mix of gauges. However, I'm sure the other visitors will agree that it's best appreciated in person — particularly when accompanied by **Becky's** fine lunch. Thank you again, **Francis and Becky**.

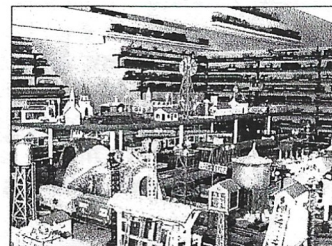
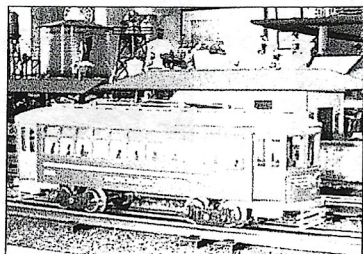
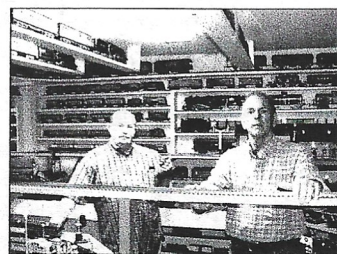
We had a wonderful day on Saturday, May 3, as we again visited three home layouts in the Placerville area. Our gracious hosts were **Kathy and Carl Locher, Fran and Roy Kilday, and Tom McConnell**. The treats and the trains were all great, and we had a very large turnout to appreciate the hospitality. **Carl and Kathy** displayed and operated almost everything imaginable — prewar, postwar, and modern eras in standard, O, HO and S gauges. **Carl** even has a rare, operating OO gauge layout. At the **Kilday's**, it was a treat to see their vast collection of everything thing under the O-gauge sun displayed or operating. I was especially taken by his rare Pacific Electric trolley which was designed, but never produced, by the Newbraugh brothers for the opening of the TTOS display at the California State Railroad Museum. **Roy** is a charter member of our Division and has been collecting trains for over 20 years.

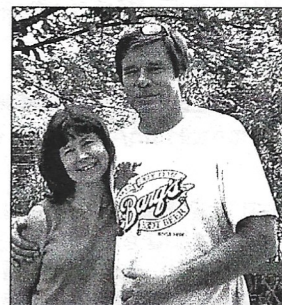
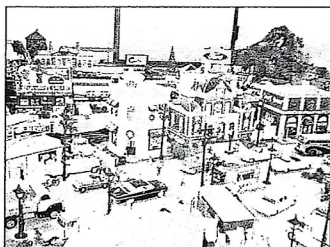
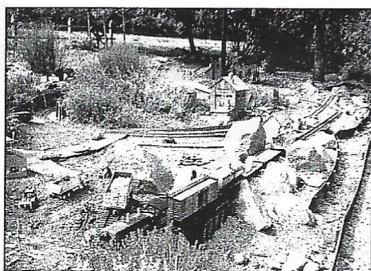
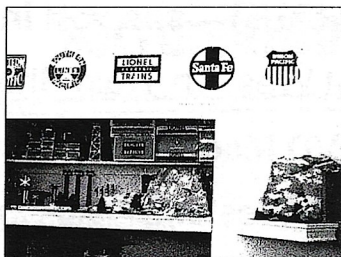
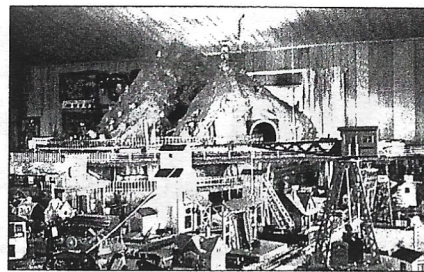
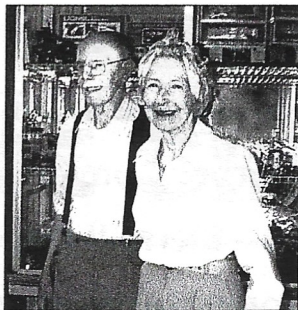
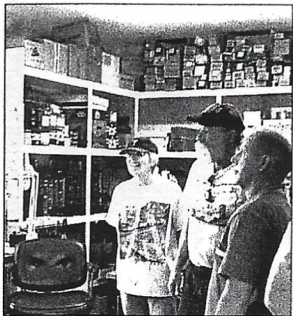
At **Tom's** place, we were treated to hot dogs served with a view of the Sierras to dream about. On his outdoor garden railway, his G-gauge trains run through a granite cut and pass by hand-built structures and a real waterfall. Indoors, the O-gauge layout fills a room with operating postwar and modern trains and operating accessories. **Tom** collects a lot more than trains, and the visitors enjoyed seeing his home filled with collectibles, his player piano, and his great car collection, complete with a restored Model T Ford.

We thank all of our hosts for an enjoyable and entertaining afternoon.

Upcoming Layout tours

We'll be taking the summer off from the layout tours because of holidays and vacations and, of course, the TTOS National Convention in August. We'll resume in September when you're all invited to Galt to see our layout. I haven't made many changes since the last visit, so for entertainment, I'll throw in a little demonstration of TMCC, if anyone is interested. We'll skip October for the River City Meet and close out the year by traveling to Auburn in November to visit **Paul and Susane Wells**. Assuming the club wants to continue the layout tours, **Pete White** has volunteered to be first up next year. Several of you have expressed interest in showing your layout, so please be thinking about volunteering next year.





TTOS National Board Meeting Report by Jeff Silvera and George Ann Hornor

Steve Waggoner, president of the San Joaquin Valley Division, was unable to attend the TTOS National Board of Directors meeting on March 26, 2004, so I sat in for him. This gave me a chance to learn how TTOS business is conducted and an opportunity to hear what problems other divisions face. I came away with the impression that we should all thank our national officers, division presidents and TTOS staff for their hard work. It takes a lot of effort to keep TTOS going, and I think those of us in the rank and file tend to overlook that. Jeff and I sat together and, between us, came up with this report.
George Ann Hornor

TTOS National Board Meeting: This was the first meeting of the BOD since the election, so much of the meeting was devoted to thanking the outgoing officers and introducing the incoming ones.

At the time of the meeting, TTOS had 5,400 members, down from 6,250 a year ago, and down from 7,800 ten years ago. This continuing decline in membership is a primary concern of the new BOD, and President Gary Keck stated that his main focus during his term will be to retain and recruit members. He asked each division to come up with a recruitment plan for their area and to ask their members for ideas on how to change this disturbing trend of a shrinking membership.

The decline in membership has, naturally, caused a decline in revenues as did the low interest rates on our savings. Stan Batynski, the outgoing treasurer, reported that because of cost-cutting measures and other reductions in expenses, we are not in immediate financial difficulty. He cautioned that problems could lie ahead unless the decline in membership reverses itself.

The TTOS Business Office reported on the status of several ongoing projects. They reported that sales of the Smokey Bear tank car and box cars went very well. The office managers gave special recognition to Stan Batynski for his help in many capacities during his term of treasurer.

Order Board editor, Ken Shirey, reported on changes made during the year and asked for comments on the format of the "For Sale" section. Arlen Hurt, *The Bulletin* editor also submitted a report on the status of the current issue and asked that the division presidents encourage their members to submit articles.

Tony Tesoriere and Fred Nix reported on the status of Cen-Cal's preparations for the upcoming convention in Fresno. It was also announced that the 2005 convention will be in Las Vegas. The year, 2006, will mark the 40th anniversary of TTOS, and although there was some discussion of the location for that convention, that issue was left open.

To encourage former members to return to the fold, the Board voted to drop the five-dollar penalty for reinstating memberships.

In other business, it was decided to look into issuing a new TTOS Directory, but in a less expensive format than the glossy editions of the past. It was suggested that newsprint-type paper similar to that used in the *Order Board* could be used to make the publication affordable.

The next BOD meeting will be held in Fresno during the 2004 convention.

Down the track

June 5: SVD Meet—Sierra II Center

June 15: Last day to order Convention Car

July 3: SVD Meet—Sierra II Center

August 3-7: TTOS National Convention, Fresno

August: NO SVD MEET—see you in Fresno

August 14-15: Great Western Train Show, Vallejo

September 4: SVD Meet—Sierra II Center

September 18-19: Great Western Train Show, Stockton

October 2: SVD River City Meet, Scottish Rite Center



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