

SPRING **THE SIDE TRACK** NEWS from the Toy Train Operating Society Sacramento Valley Division 2005

President's Message

by Jeff Silvera

Well, another year has flown by. The Holidays have come and gone. We're another year older, and (hopefully) a little wiser. We had some nice outings with our club layout. We did the Santa Toy Train Parade at the Railroad Museum and had a real nice time Thanksgiving weekend. We had our annual food and toy drive in December. We also set up at the Cal Expo GATS show. Thanks to all who came out and helped! Without you, we could not have done these events. As you know, this is a volunteer club and we count on your participation to make this kind of events succeed. I encourage everyone to get involved; It sure does make things more fun with your help.

As you know, Member **Ron Wong** has been working very hard at getting our club logo on some apparel. He has been taking orders for shirts and caps and will be finalizing it some time in March. If you would like to order please

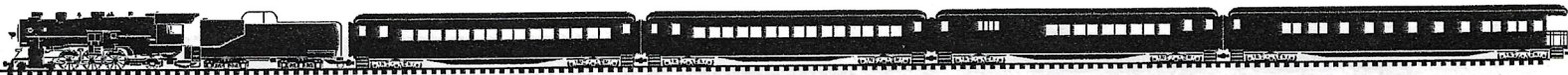
see him at our meetings, or give him a call at (916) 716-3847, or email him at hialoha@hawaii.com. The club logo is a important part of who we are in our national organization, and our community. I encourage all our members to place an order - and fly our colors.

Some events coming up will be the spring Cal-Stewart meet in Santa Clara put on by Nor-Cal TCA, March 18-20, and the Scottish Rite meet on May 28th. There will be NO meet at the Sierra 2 Center in June. We will all be heading up to visit **Rose & Kit Craighead** and **Susane & Paul Wells** in Meadow Vista (they are next-door neighbors) the first Saturday, June 4th. We hope to have our club layout to run trains, and a hot dog lunch.

Also our TTOS National convention will be in Las Vegas August 2nd thru the 6th. Be sure to get your order in for the convention car! Register Early. Get involved, Make it Happen!

Sincerely, *Jeff Silvera*

***** WE WILL NOT HAVE A MEETING AT SIERRA II CENTER IN JUNE THE JUNE MEET WILL BE HOSTED BY ROSE & KIT CRAIGHEAD AND SUSANE & PAUL WELLS AT THEIR MEADOW VISTA HOMES *****



Layout Tours

by Jack Hornor

We have a great lineup of home layout tours for 2005.

We start the year with a visit to South Land Park where **Bob Effa** and **Beth Ison** have built a 1940's era railroad. Their layout was a big hit when we visited a while back, and I know we'll enjoy a second look.

In April, we will travel to Yolo to see **Bill Bender's** layout. We've all seen that Bill likes to scratch-build and kit-bash on the small layouts he brings to the meets. I for one am looking forward to seeing his home layout and shop.

We're in for a special treat in May because **Bill Wilson** and **Sandy Davison** have invited us to Nevada City where they included a 20' x 30' train room while they were building their beautiful home. Not only will we see their large layout and collection of postwar and modern trains, they've invited us for a barbecue lunch. They'll need to know about how many to plan for, so there will be a sign-up sheet at the membership desk.

June brings another special event. We were unable to reserve our regular meeting hall that month, so we're moving the meet to the **Craighead's** home in Meadow Vista and throwing in a picnic for good measure. **Kit and Rose** will be demonstrating their layout, and two doors down, **Paul Wells** hopes to have his trains running by then. Weather permitting, the model crew will be setting up our layout in the driveway. There will be limited trading. There won't be very many tables available, but you're welcome to bring your own table or card table to set up. There is plenty of room! After the meeting and trading, a hotdog lunch will be provided by the Division. Families are welcome as there will be activities for all ages including swimming at the local pool in the town park, a quarter mile away. If possible, you might want to bring your own chairs. Again, we'll need a head count, so there will be a sign-up sheet for this picnic.

We'll be skipping July and August, but in September, back by popular demand is a visit to Madison Hardware West, or **Dave Thomsen's** garage in Woodland. His artistry and imagination fascinate all of us, so here's your chance to take another look.

We're invited back to the **White House** in November, so plan to visit **Pete and Nancy** and their collections of trains and toys of all kinds.

So, that's the lineup, and I'm sure we'll enjoy all these visits.

Membership News and Notes

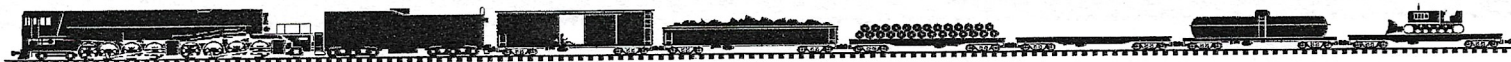
by George Ann Hornor

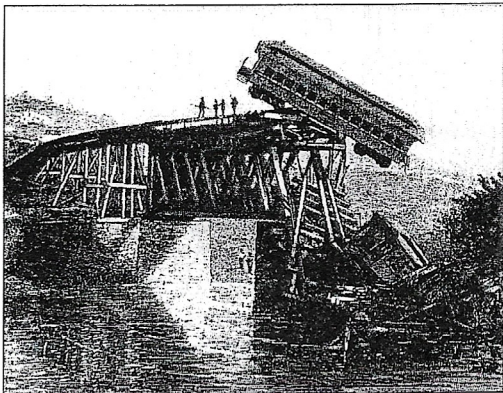
We're off to a great start this year with the addition of several new and returning members. **Walt and Linda Davis** from Cedar Ridge and **Brian Farnsworth** from Elk Grove have recently joined. And we're happy to welcome back **Sal Gurgiolo** from Carson City, **Wally Ripley** and **Harold Wescott** from Placerville and **Steve Shiflett** from Carmichael.

I'm pleased to report that more than half of you paid your dues during or before the February meeting. Thanks. And thanks to **Don and Janice Clark** who helped me keep track. We'll be after you again at the next couple of meetings, and then I'll send the new membership cards in April.

As you renew your membership, please make sure we have your correct e-mail address. I send announcements and reminders between meets. If you would like to receive these messages, please make sure your e-mail program is set to accept messages from me at my new e-mail address, **gahornor@softcom.net**. Since I address the message to multiple users, spam filters might block it.

Now, a bit of editorializing — Have you noticed the increased activity in train meets lately? Those of you who came to our February meet saw a big turnout and a lot of activity. And I think it's a trend. The November Cal-Stewart meet in Pasadena was way up, with the main hall filled to capacity with 439 tables, 80 more than last year. Attendance at the San Joaquin Valley Division meet in Turlock was 1,743, up 122 from last year and tables were sold out. In January the Golden State Lionel Railroad Club hit the jackpot in Hayward with 870 paid guests. It looks to me like people are stepping back from their monitors and finding there is life beyond eBay. Sure, there are still those who find sport in sniping bids, but more and more of us seem to be enjoying the camaraderie that the train clubs offer. So what better time to invite friends to join us? I'll be bringing extra membership information sheets and applications to the meets to inspire you. And you're always welcome to bring them to one meeting as a guest.





“Side Track” Temporarily Derailed

As most SVD members are aware, we try to get this quarterly newsletter printed just in time to hand out at our March, June, September and December meetings, thereby saving time and postage.

This time we were not so lucky. A computer crash delayed production by at least a week, so we are mailing this to the entire membership following the March 2005 meeting.

Some words of advice to computer users:

- 1: Back up your data
- 2: Back up your data
- 3: Back up your data

-JA



By Don Rosa

The Sacramento Valley American Flyer Club will be hosting the 6th annual Flyer Fest West on May 21-22. FFW- 2005.

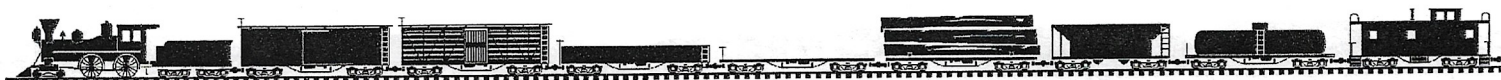
The activities will begin on Saturday at 11:00am in Elk Grove, just south of Sacramento. This is the largest “S” event in California but has attractions for all gauges. In addition to the trading hall, there will be clinics, a modeling contest, train races, operating layouts, door prizes, and the annual Fest BBQ dinner.

The club is offering a Mini-Craft style “Clubhouse” as its commemorative item (quantities are limited). The clinics will focus on locomotive motor conversions, simple scenery techniques, and displaying your collection.

On Sunday, there will be a tour of the CSRM and the new exhibit “Small Wonders: The Magic of Toy Trains.”

Registration packets will be available at the TTOS meetings, by inquiring with Jeff Silvera or Mike Boyd, or by emailing FFW2005@comcast.net.

Remember, early registration ends on April 30th, 2005.



Show and Tell

By Richard Zanotti

At our December 4 meeting our theme was WHAT YOU WANTED FOR CHRISTMAS WHEN YOU WERE A KID.

Clarence Hanks brought in the train that he was not able to get in its entirety as a kid. The year was 1935. Clarence was about twelve years old. He saw in a department store in Fresno an American Flyer green streamlined passenger set. He told his parents about the set and they gave him a couple of dollars. When he went back to get the set he discovered that the cars were selling for ten cents each. He grabbed the four cars and went back to get the engine which was selling for twenty-five cents. Unfortunately, a little boy had grabbed it and wouldn't part with it. As a result Clarence only had the four cars and not the complete set.

Time passed. Clarence grew up and joined the Army Air Corp during World War II. He was stationed in India. After the war he gave the cars to his brother-in-law. The cars were destroyed in a garage fire. Later Clarence was able to purchase the complete set. Times had changed and he definitely had to pay a lot more than sixty-five cents (The sale price of the original set).

In December of 1954, **Bill Bender's** parents took him to Hudson's Department Store in Detroit. They asked him what he wanted for Christmas and he told them that he wanted a Lionel Skylark Set. He received it for Christmas. Fifty years later Bill was running the set for us.

Jerry Azzaro brought in a small wooden tool with a short dowel projecting from it. It was made by Lionel in 1947, and was used to push smoke pills into the smoking units on the early Lionel smoking locomotives. He called it a "SMOKE POKER".

I wanted to broaden the historical perspective by displaying a Carrette live steam locomotive and train. The wheel configuration was 2-2-0 and is called a STORKLEG. The cars, though the same gauge as the engine (O Gauge) were of a smaller scale. This is the way the set came as shown in the GAMAGES 1906 CATALOG. **Dr. John DeHaan** was not impressed with the idea of a spirit fired train going around a Christmas tree that has lit candles on it, as it would have been in 1906.

I also had a couple of JEP (Le Joliet De Paris) items. One was a transformer disguised as a switch tower. The others were different pieces of O Gauge track that had wooden ties, complete with spikes and track plates. The items were produced in France during either the 1920's or 1930's.

We did not have a SVD meeting in January. At our February meeting **Rose Craig-head** brought a great little perception and problem solving train game that would be good for both children and politicians. It is a puzzle composed of different cars of a freight train set on an embossed grid. The game can be played at many levels of difficulty.

Dave Thomsen displayed his almost completed PLEXIGLASS BOXCAR. This car was never produced by any toy train maker. He made it by modifying a regular Union Pacific boxcar. Dave got the idea from **Stan Batynski's** article in February's TTOS ORDER BOARD.

A very rare Lionel Union Pacific 50th Anniversary Passenger Set was displayed by **Tom MacConnell**. This set was in very good condition and is very rare.

Mark Boyd shared a BART Train made by the U.S. Toy Train Company. It origi-



Show and Tell Gallery

nally sold for \$250. Mark had to part with more than twice that much when he purchased it in Fresno last August. It has trucks that are unique and a different kind of car coupling system. This train uses a surplus Marx motor.

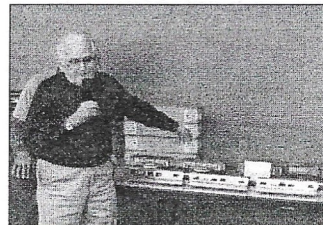
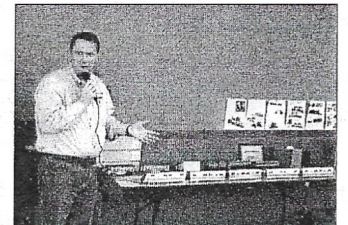
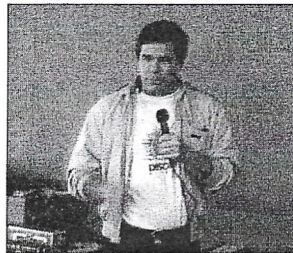
Clarence Hanks showed a very rare O gauge Lionel Blue Comet Set. **Doug Wilson** acquired this set in 1978. Clarence restored this set for him, fifteen years ago. He had the paint made up and placed in spray cans at a shop in Fresno. Doug sold the train. Last Fall, Clarence received a call from the person who bought it. He wanted Clarence to sell it for him. He is tempted to buy it himself.

Jim Havey purchased an interesting passenger car at York last October. It was made in Turkey out of recycled margarine tins. This floor toy had "ANKARA EXPRESS" printed on its sides.

I shared a hundred-year-old stationary Ernst Plank steam engine that still has its original box and utensils. After I purchased it from "Hilly" Lazarus, he sent me the original directions. They were printed in German, French, and English. The original directions recommended using "Good wine spirits" as fuel.

I also displayed an article from ANTIQU
TOY WORLD about the auction of the first half of the Ward Kimball Collection. The Noel Barrett auction grossed about \$2.75 million. Eight hundred thousand of the dollars were from foreign bidders. A Marklin circus train sold for over one hundred thousand dollars. A Marklin gunboat sold for seventy-one thousand, five hundred dollars.

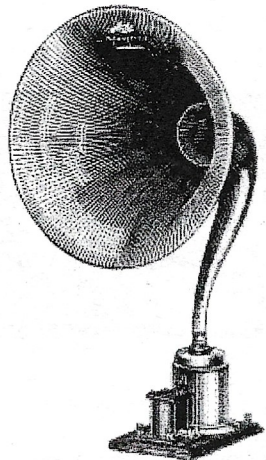
The theme for March will be STREET-CARS. Don't forget to bring in yours. Show & Tell can be only as good as you make it. It is your Show & Tell.



RADIO DAZE(D)

By "Boxcar Jack" Ahearn

I'm not getting older....everyone else is getting younger!



What follows is another incident of what I call 'Generational Kicks in the Gut!' And, once again, I recently received another such moment of reality at the California State Railroad Museum.

During our annual Thanksgiving Weekend toy and scale train show, I had my 'compact' layout on display across from the somewhat larger, twelve by thirty foot, Thomas W. Sefton layout. Also adjoining my modest display, as part of the Mu-

seums overall 'Miracle of Toy Trains' exhibition, was a vintage, floor model radio. On it, are played tapes of authentic Lionel Train commercials, aired during their 'Golden Age'.

Children were fascinated by the size and shape of the radio and excitedly spun its large dial with glee. Parents were also attracted to the sounds of the past and showed particular interest in its 'art-deco' appearance.

Being close to that attraction, I would, when getting a child's glance, call over and explain to the youngster...."That was called a radio!".....On several occasions, a voice of newly acquired enlightenment would, with a comprehensive nod, respond ..."Oh, I see..... thank you..."

I'm chagrined to say, those grateful tones of newly acquired enlightenment came, not from the child...but the parent!

ORDER YOUR SVD CLUB APPAREL NOW!

Ron Wong has completed the project to obtain official SVD caps, shirts and vests for our members. These garments will look great when we attend train meets, go on club outings, or operate our club layout.

You can select from baseball caps, polo shirts, tee shirts and vests, all with the familiar SVD logo. Also, an embroidered patch is available for attaching to any item of clothing from bikinis to tuxedos!

If you haven't filled out your order for club apparel now is the time! The official deadline was to have been the meeting on March 5th, but is being extended due to delays with this Side Track.

We need 4 more purchases for the orange vests - there is a minimum requirement since it is a special order. These vests will be different from the ones worn by the Layout Crew as it is bolero style with open front. It is sleeveless and comes with two side patch pockets in a polyester/cotton fabric which is washable. The club logo will be embroidered directly on the left front side. There is plenty of room to sew on your favorite railroad patches on the back. Note: the price for size 2X shirts is \$2 more.

Order forms are available at the meeting or can be mailed to you by calling Ron Wong. If you have any questions, he can be reached at (916) 716-3847 or by e-mail: hialoha@hawaii.com

ELECTION OF SVD OFFICERS

It was just a tad overdue, but the Division elected new officers at the February meeting. Our bylaws state that officers' terms are for two years, and no officer can serve for more than two consecutive terms. Although some officers had served their two terms, we had trouble finding members willing to take their place on the Board of Directors. No one had come forward as of the November 2004 meeting, and the members voted to suspend the bylaws and ask the sitting Board of Directors to continue their terms until the February meeting when a new election could be held. At the meeting held on February 5, President **Jeff Silvera** and Treasurer **Mark Boyd** agreed to serve in their positions for another two-year term, and were unanimously approved by the members present. Jeff then nominated **Bob Milton** as vice president, and **George Ann Hornor** as secretary. They were also unanimously approved. **Lee Deter** remains director-at-large.



WHEN TO GO SHOPPING WITH YOUR WIFE

- OR -

A TRIP TO THE CRAFT STORE

By Mike Boyd

I don't know about you, but I'm the kind of shopper who gets what he's after and leaves. I can get out of Costco with a full load in 20 minutes. I'm not the kind to browse and look for hours, (unless it's a train show or Sears tool dept.) I've found that one of the keys to a happy marriage is to let the little woman shop on her own. No pressure to hurry, leave, or get home on her or me.

Well, not following my own advice, I reluctantly accompanied my lovely wife to the craft store recently. I was pleasantly surprised to find an array of things that can be applied to this hobby we're all so hooked on. Now, since I'm a Flyer guy, most of what appealed to me was geared towards S gauge but can easily work with all gauges. The only limit is your own imagination.

First off, upon entering, I was surrounded by a large array of plastic flowers. Now, I like an azalea as much as the next guy but I can't see myself spending a Sunday afternoon looking at this stuff. But after a bit of browsing, I discovered some of these items were of very fine detail. Fine enough that with a little trimming, they might even pass for — a tree? Yes, there were several varieties of plastic greenery and floral items that could be usable on a layout. With a little imagination, an operator could come up with a low cost forest. I also was recently given an article where the modeler used the stems from these type if flowers and glued on shredded foam for foliage and *Voila!*, a nice looking tree.

So, as I continued strolling, I came upon a section that contained a variety of small wooden items. I found small spools in several sizes, wooden blocks that could be used as shipping crates, wooden beads that with a little help could double as barrels. Again, it's all in your imagination. A little further in the wood section were all sizes of wooden dowels (telephone/power poles/ log loads), balsa wood, and craft sticks which amazingly are very similar to ice cream sticks and when cut to length fit the Flyer sawmill perfectly. Also there are small pieces of plywood in which the layers are very thin and when cut

to size resemble a, stack of plywood or similar sheet construction material, lumber loads, etc.

And while on the subject of sticks, if you like corn-dogs, the sticks from these babies are very usable as scale lumber. The wooden sticks for stirring coffee work well also.

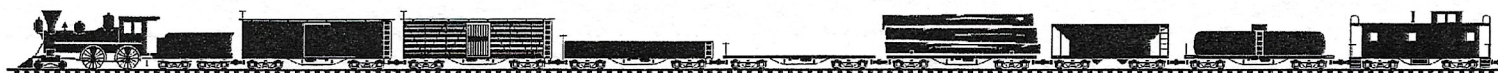
Down the next isle was the jewelry section. I found lengths of small chain in black, silver, and gold that could easily be used to secure that tractor on your flatcar. Also there were an array of small wire items to fasten your chain together. Another brainstorm I had was the small plastic beads. They could double for insulators on the power, telephone poles we mentioned earlier. I'm sure there's more usable stuff in here that I haven't thought of. If you come up with some ideas, let me know.

A little farther down was the cake decorating department. Since I'm a cookie man myself I wasn't to thrilled. To my surprise, I found plastic Greek style columns used on wedding cakes that come in 3 different lengths that will look great on a courthouse or government building your dying to build.

There was also a line of products geared towards school children that involved Styrofoam models of the California missions. There is a line of products to go along with these that included figures of people and animals, trees, and some neat simulated tile roof material that while to big for S, would work with other gauges.

Along with all this, they also carry the usual and unusual array of spray paint, glue, foam board, construction paper, and other art supplies. Can't you see the artist cringe when you use that high dollar paint brush to dust off your favorite steamer. I guess we get our fun where we can find it.

So, in conclusion, what I thought to be a wasted Sunday afternoon of shopping turned out to be a fruitful experience in the pursuit of my favorite hobby. One more tip, whenever shopping like this, always wear your dark glasses. No one will know what your staring at while shopping with your wife at the craft store.



Down the track

March 18-20: Spring Cal-Stewart Meet, Santa Clara

April 2: SVD Meet — Sierra II Center**

April 9: Cen-Cal Division Toy Train Meet

April 29-30: York Meet

May 7: SVD Meet — Sierra II Center**

May 21-22: Flyer Fest West, Elk Grove (details inside)

May 28: Sac-Sierra TCA Toy Train Meet, Scottish Rite Center

June 4: Special SVD Meet — Meadow Vista (no meet at Sierra II Center in June)

*****followed by a home layout visit***



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