



THE SIDE TRACK

FALL NEWS from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division 2005

Membership News and Notes

by George Ann Hornor

We're happy to welcome two new members. **Pam Richmond** and her family are from Sacramento and were sent to us by our friend, **Pete Goodier** of American Flyer fame. **Geary Musselman** recruited **Jim Milligan** from Davis. Thanks for joining, and we hope to see you every month.

Our next big meeting is the River City Meet at the Scottish Rite Center on October 1st. In the past, some people have forgotten and have shown up at the Sierra 2 meeting hall. But that won't happen this year, will it?

I was looking at the last issue of the Side Track and see that I promised an updated membership directory after July. It's a good thing I didn't pin myself down to how long after July that would be. All I can say is, I have a new computer, and I have to learn to adjust the screen resolution to be compatible with these tired old eyes, then I have to learn Windows XP. Progress is pretty slow, but I'll distribute it as soon as I can.

Let's congratulate our member, **Mark Boyd**, who is the new editor of *Train Collector's Quarterly*, TCA's national magazine. That's a huge job, and I hope he'll have time to make our meetings, too.

THAT HANDY THING CALLED E-MAIL

As most of you know, I send reminders of upcoming events and other train-worthy information by a group e-mail message. If you're new to the joys of electronic communication or if your e-mail address changes, please correct it on the list on the clip-board at the membership desk. And if you have a message you would like to have relayed to the other members, you can send it to me at gahornor@softcom.net, and I'll forward it to the group. The list changes so frequently

that it's easiest to keep it in a central location, i.e., Galt.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

There has been a change in the schedule of future conventions. Because of a mixup with a contract, the 2006 convention will be in Costa Mesa and the Altoona convention will be in 2007.

NEWS FROM OTHER DIVISIONS

The San Joaquin Valley Division has added some crafts tables to their annual December train show. Old timers remember when the crafts fair in the building next door attracted families that were interested in trains and crafts. So this year, they are experimenting with expanding the show into two halls, and inviting a number of crafts people. Flyers will be available at our River City Meet.

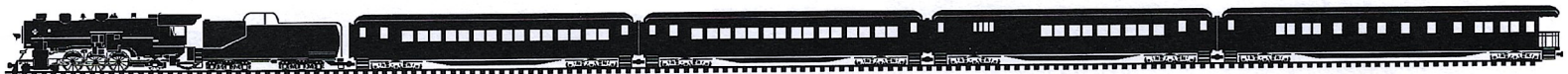
Tony Tesoriere, president of the Cen-Cal Division, has invited us to come to a classic auto show in Le-moore on October 8 and 9. The club is participating by running their layout in the train station at 300 E Street. There will be a few tables of trains for sale. Their club will also be bringing flyers to the River City Meet.

Challenger Making the Rounds

Jack Ahearn found and submitted this information:

Union Pacific Railroad's "Challenger" No. 3985, the world's largest operating steam locomotive, will be on a six-state, 2,800-mile tour from Cheyenne, Wyo., to Portland, Ore., to celebrate railroad heritage.

The Challenger is scheduled to appear at Roseville on September 3-4.



Layout Tours

by Jack Hornor

Our June meeting in Meadow Vista was a great success, thanks to our hosts **Kit and Rose Craighead** and **Paul and Susane Wells**, and to **Norman LaClair** and the modular layout crew. We missed one important member, though. Kit was in the hospital having unexpected surgery, and missed his own party. The rest of us enjoyed the fruits of his labor, however, including the hotdog lunch he had arranged to be served by his local Lion's Club. You can eat twice at the next party, Kit.

Kit and Rose had recently changed their layout by taking out a mountain and removing grades from their track plan to make for easier operation. Everyone also admired their trolley which runs on a shelf high on a living room wall. Rose used a wall paper border with forest scenes behind the tracks. Paul and Susane, who had recently moved, had just enough time to get a layout up and trains running. Good work, folks.

A few people brought their own tables and sold trains, but mostly it was a day devoted to operators. As I mentioned, the Craigheads' and Wells' layouts were operating. Our modular layout with all of the sections was set up in the driveway, and **Dave Thomsen** brought two of his portable layouts. For a while we had fourteen trains running at the same time! And over three acres! We were happy to see several families with kids from toddlers to teenagers, as well as some of our newest members and people that usually miss our monthly meetings because they live so far from Sacramento. We thank our hosts and all who participated.

FUTURE OUTINGS

Because the June outing and last year's Coloma trip worked so well, there has been discussion about other field trips. The swap meet that conflicts with our June meet is an annual event at Sierra School, so that may be a good time to leave town. One place that has been suggested is the Western Railway Museum at Rio Vista Junction. They have a nice picnic area and they welcome groups. **Jerry Azzaro** is a member and volunteer there, and he has offered to help set it up. Please talk to Jeff or any of the other officers if you're interested or if you have other places in mind.

TTOS AND THE INTERNET -- CAN YOU HELP?

The TTOS website (www.ttos.org) is being revised, and you can see the improvements already. If you'll follow the links to the divisions, you'll see that our site is somewhat outdated. One of our members had volunteered to set up and oversee our site, but his job situation

Food, fun and trains in the great outdoors. Our June meeting at Meadow Vista, courtesy of Rose and Kit Craighead and Paul and Susane Wells.



changed and he can no longer spend the time it takes to act as webmaster. So we're looking for someone to take over the job of designing a new page and keeping our information up-to-date. If you have the necessary skills, please let Jeff know.

UPCOMING LAYOUT TOURS

The September layout visit was changed. The **Thomsens** are preparing to move, so the visit will be to our layout in Galt. We'll be visiting **Dave and Marcy** later.

November's tour will be another special one as we all look forward to visiting **Pete and Nancy** at the **White** house. They live in Fair Oaks so it's not a long drive, and their trains and other collections are a delight to see.

Now it's time to set up a schedule for 2006. Several of you have mentioned to me that you would like to host a tour when your layout construction was a little farther along. So, I may be back to see if you're ready. Meanwhile, please let me know if you would like to be a host. After all, you went to all that work to build your railroad, so why not show it off? Or if you're stumped, why not ask for suggestions? Don't worry about serving refreshments. Some people do, and some don't. Snacks are always welcome, but it's up to you (and possibly your spouse).



What Happened in Las Vegas

By Kathy Locher



The TTOS Las Vegas Convention was great! (at least for us). The only people I saw from our club were **Chuck Stone**, **Tom Gibson**, and **Clarence Hanks**. The weather was fine; in fact, it was cooler in Las Vegas than here.

We attended two of the tours:

1. The layout tour of three homes in the Las Vegas area. Two were in converted garage pads, and the third in a huge room. My favorite was the one who had professional help from a guy that does design for some of the casinos. It was unbelievable. It was almost four levels high, and he only had one switch. But, the detail work was something else. People, buildings, etc. were spectacular.

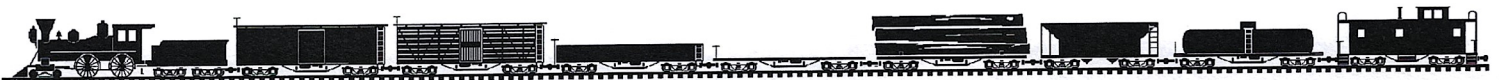
2. Pahrump tour of the winery, brothel, and one layout. This was a great tour. We all had a really nice time. (It was such a popular tour that both tours were sold out.)

We all were feeling pretty good by the time we left the winery. Here we have about 50 wineries in El Dorado County, and we bought a bottle of wine. The brothel was fascinating. We had a guided tour of the place. What was really interesting was that a question was brought up about what counties brothels could operate in, and the guide kind of was answering it, when **Richard Rauch**, who lives in Carson City, gave us the facts and figures of where they could operate. He worked for the state of Nevada.

The number of tables at show was approximately 60, but sold out, for the room size. **Carl** attended the auction both days and got some great bargains.

The general meeting Saturday morning was informative. I'll only cover the highlights, as it will be reported in detail, I'm sure, in one of the publications:

1. Grading standards are going to be instituted (similar to TCA).
 2. Treasurer gave report; basically club in black, but not by much.
 3. Fresno Convention financially a major success.
 4. **Stan Batynski** praised for work on brochures, boxcar design, helping office staff, answering questions, etc.
 5. **Stan Batynski** resigned from National TTOS
 6. Banquet instituted a Chinese raffle auction. Buy tickets, then place ticket in cup of item you are interested in, (you can put in all your tickets or one) then a drawing held.
 7. **Mr. Keck** on Las Vegas convention: Barely made the room night commitment (TTOS owed approximately \$15,000 from the 2003 Convention).
- Considering moving Pasadena office to another location, but by-laws will have to be changed as they state that the natl. office must be on Walnut St. in Pasadena. Will be a vote by all on Nov. ballot.
8. Membership directory will be on line. Passwords will be given with membership renewal. Will save club approx. \$15,000(?)
 9. Nominating committee for national office. No one opposed except for Treasurer (**Smith vs Robinette**) and Director at Large (**Latta vs Young**).



Show and Tell

By Richard Zanotti

The theme of our May meeting was, "Backdrops, plots, tunnels, etc.". **Jon Lundberg** presented some Built-Rite cardboard products, including buildings, backdrops, and a downtown city block. He even had a cardboard tunnel that was not practical, and as a result, is now extremely rare. **Jerry Azzaro** had some postwar American Flyer backdrops that when assembled properly give a three dimensional quality. He also had two A. F. tunnels. One was made of hard plastic and the other of Styrofoam. They seemed to be made from the same mold. Jerry also had a scenery product made by Life-Like. This paper product, when moistened, could be shaped into mountains and other things. Jerry also had some printed backdrops by Ideal Models and Life-Like. A Mike's Train House cardboard circus set was shared by **Pete White**. This set is a reproduction of the Ives circus set backdrop. **Mark Boyd** showed the Lionel tunnel portals that he bought with his paper route money in the 1950's. He also pointed out that Lionel was now marketing factory made layouts that sell for around \$5,745. Mark showed an article from a 1981 TCA QUARTERLY on tunnels that was written and illustrated by WUK (Ward Kimball). The article and illustrations were an amusing essay that was in some sense even irreverent. At least Ward never had to deal with the present FCC!

A collection of rare pristine tunnels was shared by **Clyde Easterly**. They included two early American Flyer papier mâché tunnels. One was decorated with sponge trees and the other had lights. He also had a beautiful paper mache Dorfan tunnel and two early papier mâché tunnels made by Ives. **Chuck Stone** displayed a beautiful 90 degree Lionel O gauge papier mâché tunnel made between 1932 and 1934. It was in mint condition and still in the original box.

The strangest coincidence then occurred: **Clarence Hanks** brought in the *same* rare Lionel tunnel. His was also in mint condition in its original box. This is the first time that two very rare items that were identical except for variations due to hand made production techniques were presented at the same Show & Tell.

Clarence also had some Lionel billboards from the 1950's-1960's and some American Flyer mountain panels that lock together. They are made in such

a way that trains can run in between them. He also had a standard gauge version of the 90 degree curved Lionel tunnel and a metal Lionel standard gauge tunnel with a light that he had recently purchased. Clarence also had some metal English village backdrops that he uses at Christmas.

We did not have Show & Tell at our June meet at Clipper Gap.

The theme of our July meet was patriotism. **Bill Bender** brought in a platter that commemorated the first Freedom Train. I remember seeing this train on the Marina Green in San Francisco in the late 1940's.

Chuck Brasher presented a red, white, and blue box car that he received at the TCA Convention in Seattle. The inscription on it, "K-Line Loves America", really struck a chord with Chuck. The fact that it was followed by the statement "Made in China" made a deep impression on him. The toy weapons storage rack that **Jack Hornor** shared would please any terrorist. It had bins labeled, "Atomic Bombs", "Rocket Parts", "Disintegrator" and "Launch Fuel". He also had a U.S. Air Force missile car and an Atomic Energy Commission railcar.

An HO model of the 1975 Freedom Train locomotive and tender were shared by **Chuck Stone**. I remember seeing that train in Detroit. I also saw it at Aquatic Park in San Francisco a few months later. By the time it arrived in San Francisco, the locomotive had been replaced.

George Ann Hornor had a G gauge car commemorating a fictitious Olympic salmon spawning event. The car has a salmon jumping up a cascade. On the sides of the car are signs showing the scores of judges from different countries: Germany 7.5, United States 7.0, and of course, France 10.5.

I brought in a Carlisle and Finch streetcar (#42). **George Hopkins** rebuilt the body on an original frame and motor. I also had a model of the Statue of Liberty. This statue was also pictured on some of the World War II advertisement that I brought. Naturally, the advertisements were very patriotic. I especially liked the advertisement from the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. It featured a poem telling about trains moving at night and how they were uniting the nation in the great war effort (World War II).



Show and Tell Gallery

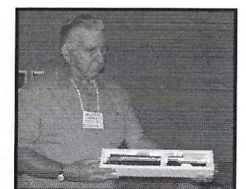
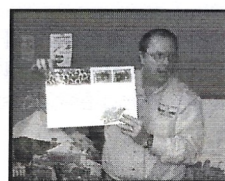
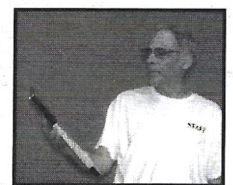
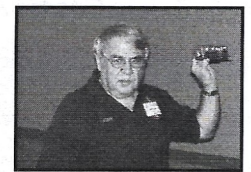
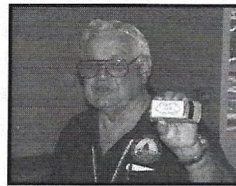
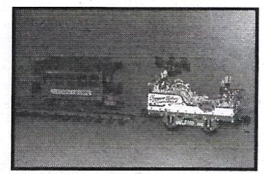
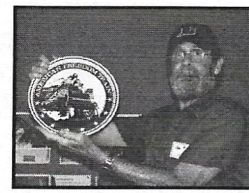
The theme of our August Show & Tell was "Convention cars". **John Smith** brought in an O gauge Lionel tank car that was made for the 1973 TCA Convention at Pittsburgh. **Jack Hornor** presented a very rare O gauge Sacramento Northern box car made for the 1983 convention in Sacramento. **Raymond Haas** had a Lionel Junior 1588 steam engine and tender that was originally a mechanical set. It had been converted to electric by Madison Hardware. This set was pulling a set of 1700 passenger cars.

John Leins shared many O gauge lithoed tin convention items. He had a forty-ninth (2003) convention Southern Pacific refrigerator car and a Northwestern 1993 convention livestock car. He also had a TTOS convention combination car called "Portland" for the convention being held there. Two other cars, locomotive and tender in Southern Pacific livery were also made for this set at a later date. John also had a O gauge QUEENS CAFE DINER that was made for the 2003 TTOS convention.

I shared some McCoy standard gauge convention cars. I had a very rare 1966 Santa Monica TCA convention car. It was so early that it had unstamped trucks (Margaret McCoy told me that at the time these cars were made they could not afford to buy the tools to punch out the trucks). The 1973 TCA convention car for the Dearborn Convention was a four window kitchen car. I also had a twentieth TCA convention car that was made for the 1974 convention at Seattle. This car was similar to the Dearborn kitchen car. The difference being that it had only two windows and was called a supply car. I also presented some pictures of Don Spencer's McCoy collection and Dave Dansky's eclectic collection. Don Spencer probably has the most complete McCoy collection that could be found.

Dave Dansky has a little of everything in his collection. If he likes it, he has it.

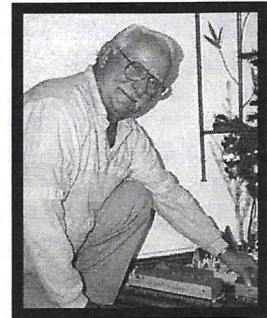
I also talked about everybody participating in Show & Tell. This is the only way that that we can keep it from becoming the exclusive domain of a few people like myself. Don't count on the other guy bringing in something to share. **YOU ALSO HAVE TO SHARE TO KEEP SHOW & TELL ALIVE AND WELL.**



In Memoriam—Bob “Ski” Simowski

Bob Simowski ("Ski") passed away at age 78 on June 26, 2005 after a long battle with cancer. Bob was one of our earliest members, and he brought many of his friends to the hobby and to TTOS. He was a gentle person with a wry sense of humor. There are a lot of "Ski" stories around. I liked the layout tour to his house where visitors were treated to the sight of 90 feet of track meandering throughout the living room, fastened down with screws through the carpet. He was also very generous and liked to give away things from his own collection to help others keep their trains running. He was a real asset to our club and we miss him. However, if there are raffles in Heaven, we know who's winning all the prizes.

- George Ann Hornor



K-Line Sawmill

By Jack Hornor

For those of you in the K-Line club, one of the specials offered for the 2005 renewal was an operating, old-fashioned sawmill accessory. I just installed one on my layout, and I'm very happy with it. The mill is made of wood and has an operating saw, smoke, and lights. It even sounds like an operating mill. I do offer a note of caution, however. It requires a minimum of 15 VAC with a pure sine wave to operate properly. I'm running it from an old Lionel postwar transformer which works fine. If you would like to see it working, drop by my house sometime.



OWNEY, MASCOT OF THE RAILWAY

Jack Ahearn directed our attention to the tale of Owney. This story is about a real puppy that was found in Albany, NY in 1888. The puppy was adopted by postal workers, and it lived at the post office. They named him Owney and gave him a mail sack to sleep on. One day, Owney's sack-bed was needed for the mail. Owney followed the scent when the sack was put on a train. Owney got on the train and traveled to the next station where he was found and returned to Albany. Owney must have liked traveling because he continued to get on trains and traveled all over the US.

When Owney died, his body was preserved and is on display at the National Postal Museum.



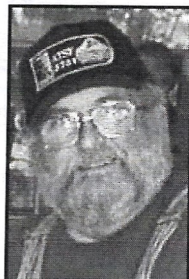
A Google or Yahoo search on "Owney" will bring up dozens of websites detailing Owney's adventures. Perhaps the best is the one sponsored by the Smithsonian National Postal Museum in Washington DC.



Club Layout News

By Norman LaClair

(Editor's note: Norman was unable to write for us due to health problems, so Paul Wells kindly offered to submit this report)



SVD acquired a 6 x 10 ft. box trailer and outfitted it to store and transport our club layout. Prior to this, our layout was stored in a garage and even a simple one day presentation (such as at our monthly meet) required four handlings of the layout. This process was hard on the layout *and* the volunteers. With the "bookshelf" design of the trailer, it is possible to access only the layout sections needed for the setup without disturbing the others. The sections ride in a framework of PVC piping, and glide in and out on protective carpeting.

Lee Deter drafted the design for the framework while **Paul Wells** laid the tile on the floor. They then got together and spent approximately 40 hours of time putting the inner frame together and installing the padding to hold the layout.

This makes loading and unloading the layout so much easier than doing everything twice. Also we don't have to unload all the sections just to set up anything smaller than the whole layout. It will also save wear and tear on the layout, let alone the fact that it has its own storage. No more garage storage or stowing in the back of Norman's truck, which has been retired after many, many years of service.

A special thanks to **Kit and Rose Craighead** for donating the tile for the floor, **Phil Fravesi** for some of the PVC pipe for the frame and **Mike Boyd** for the carpet used for padding.

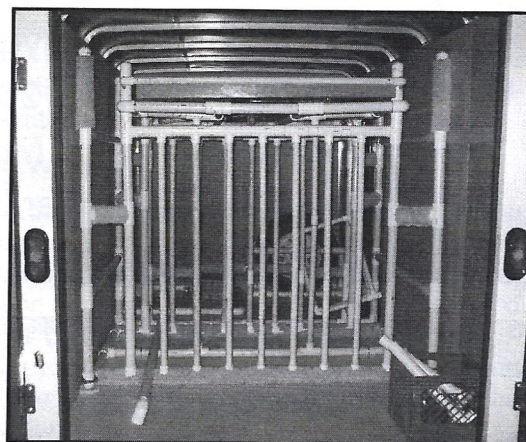
Also we cannot forget **Norman LaClair ("The Man")** who made all this happen. Without him this marvelous tool for keeping the "O" in TTOS would probably be stuck in a garage somewhere, and would not bring any smiles to thousands of faces. Thanks, Norman.

And a special thank to all the members for your support in getting the trailer so the Sacramento Valley Division of TTOS can support "The World's Greatest Hobby."

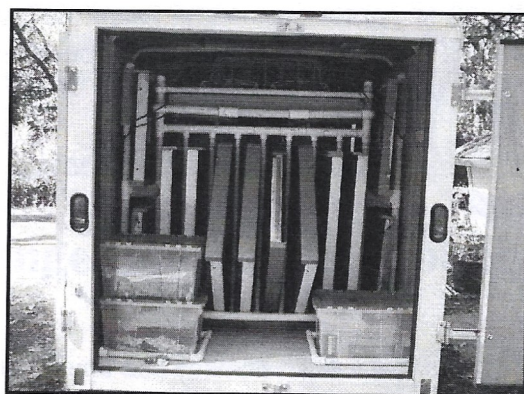
-Paul Wells



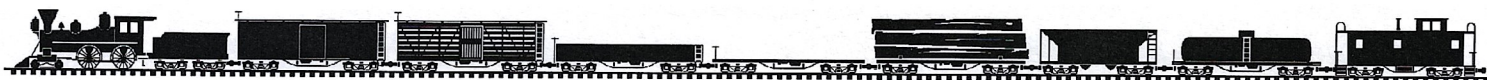
The trailer—a six by ten foot box trailer with side access door provides storage and transportation for the club's sectional S/O/Std. gauge layout.



Inside—PVC pipe forms the framework, carpet provides a protective surface.



Ready to roll! Layout sections fit snugly in the racks, with storage above and forward for tools and accessories.



Down the track

September 3: SVD Meet—Sierra II Center**

September 10: TCA Nor-Cal meet, Oakland

**October 1: River City Toy Train Meet, Sacramento
(no Sierra II meet in October)**

October 8: TCA Nor-Cal meet, Oakland

October 13-15: York Meet, York PA

November 5: SVD Meet—Sierra II Center**

November 11-12: Cal-Stewart Meet, Pasadena

November 12-13: International Railfair, Roseville

November 19: TCA Nor-Cal meet, Oakland

November 25-27: SVD Layout at CSRM's "Train Time for Santa" Event

November 26-27: GATS Show, Pleasanton

December 3: SVD Meet, Toy/Food Drive—Sierra II Center

December 3-4, Toy Train Show, Turlock

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



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