

THE SIDE TRACK

FALL NEWS from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division 2008

President's Message

by Geary Musselman

Hello Everyone !

I want to express my thanks to our National Executive Director, **Randy Giroux** and our National President, **Brian Fields**; also the National members, and last but not least our Sacramento Valley Division members who volunteered their time and hard work to make the 2008 convention a success. I hope everyone had a great time at the week-long event.

Our modular train layout will be at the town of Colfax to celebrate Railroad Days, September 27th & 28th. Please contact **Paul Wells** for more information on volunteering and run times.

I'm looking forward, as are all of you, to our Sacramento Valley Division River City Train meet October 4th at Scottish Rite Center. This will replace our regular meeting at Sierra II Center. Our next regular meeting following that will be on the first Saturday of the month, November 1st.

Just a reminder - my two year commitment as your President of SVD will end by the first of the year. We need to select a chairman to head the nominations for the slate of new officers to be voted on in November.

I want to let everyone know that I will not be accepting another term as your president. Please give some thought as to who you would like to nominate for this position. Thanks for everyone's support in the past. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve as your president. . . THANKS AGAIN, EVERYONE !!

Train Time for Santa

by George Ann Hornor

Thanksgiving weekend always brings **Train Time for Santa** when toy trains and model trains join the big guys at the California State Railroad Museum. Our modular layout will be there, along with several of our members with their own layouts. The event lasts Friday through Sunday, November 28 - 30, and it's a great place to take your kids and grandkids. Besides the wonderful trains in the museum, you can take a train ride with Santa and visit the museum for one price. Old Sac will be decorated for the season, so join us there. Contact **Norman** or **Paul** if you want to run trains.

Fall Cal-Stewart Meet

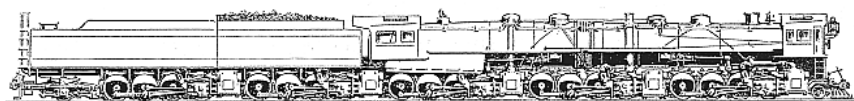
By George Ann Hornor

The dates for this year's Fall Cal-Stewart are November 21 - 23. They will be in the temporary quarters for one more year, but they have made changes in the way they use the halls. The "White Hall" (the temporary structure) will hold nothing but vendor tables. The "Brown Hall", downstairs will house the special display of Streamliners from the 30's, manufacturers' displays, operating layouts, locomotive races, demolition derby, and the auction. Tables will be assigned on first-come, first-served basis so reserve your tables early. The printed meet brochure will be slightly late this year, but you can download it at www.ttos-sw.org/cal-stewart.htm as soon as the plans are final.

TTOS National Board Meeting

Tony Rohrs served as our proxy to the board meeting held in conjunction with the national convention.

Tony's report is too long to include in this publication, so it will be available at the front desk during our Sierra 2 meeting.



HOM€ LAYOUT TOURS

Well, it is nearing the end of another year and there are only two layout tours remaining. In September, we'll be visiting Bob Effa and Beth Ison, and you'll be reading about this clever bedroom-sized layout in the next Side Track.

After skipping October for the River City Meet, we'll be going back to the White House in November. In addition to his great layout, Pete White has collections of toys and Western memorabilia that we never tire of viewing. So plan to join us for our return visit.



Jim Henson at the controls

Our last home layout visit was back in June when Jim and Delores Henson invited us to their lovely home and terrific layout. This was the first professionally-designed layout that we had visited, and the builder, Naim Shah, was on hand to explain what he had done and why. Everything is modern and controlled with either TMCC or DCS remote control. He fit a lot of operation and some great accessories into a small space. Right now, this is a duck-under operation, but eventually that will be changed with a lifting, walkthrough bridge. We all appreciated the opportunity to learn from a professional designer and to admire the layout Jim has been planning for years. Thank you, Jim and Delores, for a fun afternoon of trains, food, and discussions.

Now it's time to plan for next year. I appreciate your suggestions and offers to host visits, and I would very much like your input on how we should proceed with the home visits. One suggestion that has been made is to have layout tours every other meeting and have the club layout set up at Sierra 2 on the alternate months. Part of the reason for this is that we are now repeating ourselves by going back to layouts about every two years (or in some cases, every year). The other reason is that those volunteers who pick up the layout after the meet find that it is too late to get to layout tours that are any distance away.

This is something we should all decide, so please talk to me about how you feel about the issue. Then the Board can make a decision for next year.

Thanks, Jack Hornor



Visitors and smoke fill Jim's layout room

Founders' Day/Railroad Days Colfax, River City Meet

By Paul Wells

Hello Everyone, We have our monthly meet on Sept. 6th and the layout will be there. We will be working on tuning up the layout, so we might not be running trains. I will try to update you if anything changes before then. **Andy De Smet** has offered to let us set the layout up at his place before Colfax and Scottish Rite. Will try to get the time and dates before the monthly meet on Sept. 6th. I am trying to set up at least one weekend with Saturday and Sunday work days for the layout. We will just have to play it by ear to see what happens.

I try not to set up shows for the layout on back to back weekends, but it happens to work out that way. The show in Colfax is on September 27th & 28th from 9 am to 3 pm. We will run from 9 or 10 until 3 pm both days. I still need to talk to Carol and see what time we can get in and set up. There will be all kinds of things going on. It's going to depend on how many sign up to run in Colfax to set up run times.

Also the following weekend, Saturday October 4th, will be the River City meet at Scottish Rite. The doors open for us about 8 am to set up. We will run from 10 am till 3 pm with one hour run times.



Meeting Notes

by John DeHaan, SVD Secretary

TTOS July 2008

Business Meeting called to order by **Geary**, who introduced two guests: **Lou Maucieri** (Sacramento) guest of **Andy DeSmet** and **John DeHaan**, and **John Yoshimura**, guest of **Mike Boyd**.

Randy Giroux and **Brian Fields** gave an extensive update on the plans for the National Convention. Promises to have a full schedule of fun tours and layout visits. Volunteers needed for convention center and tours. **Tony Rohrs** gave an update on the proposal for a division car for Sacramento (2008) and Chicago (2009) Nationals. He has researched an express box car that routinely ran from Sacramento to Chicago via UP, SP, CRI&P, and C&NW trackage. He and **Dave Thomsen** will develop a "prototype" for evaluation and comment at the National meet. Thanks go to **Curt** and **James Darling** and **Tim Taormina** for their assistance in developing ideas for this special offering.

Board Meeting: **Musselman**, **Zanotti**, **B.Rohrs**, **DeHaan** and **Silvera** present.

Considered a request to display the layout at Colfax Raildays on 27 Sept. Since it was close to **Paul Wells'** house, it could be easily moved. Board approved a motion to allow Paul to take it there, with gas and other expenses not to exceed \$60. **Zanotti** reported that our account balances were down but that all current bills had been paid. TCA paid the Club \$25 for the layout display at Scottish Rite.

Preparations are under way for significant improvements to the layout and the Board approved payments for paint and new clamps. (President **Musselman** to purchase 20 on sale locally.) **Paul Wells** was paid \$75 in June and same in July for storage and transport of the layout. **Barbara Rohrs** offered to print flyers for SVD (River City and promotional) in the future at no cost.

The River City meet is approaching. **Tom Wilson** will handle table sales and table plans.

All income (from table sales and door admissions) will be transferred to Treasurer **Zanotti** at the end of the day. He will also handle the insurance rider and get a copy to **Jeff Silvera**.

It was decided that the admission fees would remain at \$5 per person, \$9 for family. **Barbara Rohrs** volunteered to be door admissions collector. There would be no coupons or discounts this year. **Jeff Silvera** would see that the announcement gets sent to TTOS Order Board, CTT, Model Railroader, OGR, and other publications. **Silvera** volunteered to serve as meet chair and will see that that the Scottish Rite staff person is tipped properly (\$40) to avoid duplication or oversight. **Barbara Rohrs** requested that copies of all previous minutes (Board and membership) be sent to her for forwarding to TTOS National.

Layout during the Public Day (Aug 17) at the National Meet will be good advertising for the SVD, so we will encourage distribution of flyers. No further business. Adjourned.

Minutes – Membership Aug 2, 2008

Meeting called to order at 0920 by President **Musselman**. No guests, no new members. Attention focused on National meet issues. **George Ann Hornor** reported that there was good support from SVD members, but registrations and volunteers were still needed. A mock-up of the suggested division car, a 1953 vintage Mt. Vernon (SP) express car in Pullman green with gold lettering was displayed by **Tony Rohrs** and **Dave Thomsen** for comment. Our thanks to them, **Tim Taormina**, **Curt** and **James Darling** for their fine efforts. Secretary **DeHaan** will approach TTOS National, Lionel, Weaver, Williams, and Atlas to move the proposal forward. A final proposal has to be completed by December. SVD will get a portion of the profits from the sale of the car linking the Sacramento and Chicago National meets in a prototypical offering. **Jack Hornor** reported that the layout had been extensively upgraded with new operating accessories, new paint and track repairs for the National meet. Our thanks to him, **Lee Deter**, **James** and **Curt Darling** and the others who donated their time and talents.

Respectfully submitted

John DeHaan, SVD Secretary





BOXCAR JACK'S WEB PICKS

Jack Ahearn surfs the web in search of great railroad sites for you

LONG AGO and FAR AWAY

I've oft referred to various members' era preference as being on the right or wrong side of World War II. In this story, I'd like to lean neither Pre nor Post War, but right smack dang in the middle of it! Before getting into the feature of this effort, I'll start with a little of my usual mushy nostalgic stuff.

In my childhood neighborhood, there was a magical land called Farmers Oval. There were no Farmers, nor was it Oval. It was just four huge wooded areas dissected by tracks of the Long Island Rail Road and what I later learned to be the New York Connecting R.R. The tracks of the latter crossed over the Long Islands tracks by means of a trestle bridge which the railroad copied directly from design plans of The Junior Bridge Co. Or so I had thought during my single digit years!

But this tale doesn't have to do with the bridge or the names of either railroad. Rather, it tells of the many rumors during 1942-45 about 'Top Secret' Troop Trains that were going to pass through the Farmers Oval. After the war, the rumors changed to; 'Army Trains' that were going to toss off surplus war materials as they passed by. (Tanks, too?)

We gullible kids believed every one of those wild goose chases. Many afternoons, after the school bell rang, we lined up along the tracks, waiting to see flat cars loaded with Jeeps, Tanks, Canons and all sorts of Khakiated Weapons or maybe even some Camouflaged Fighter Planes! "Thunderbolts!... Corsairs!... Mustangs'...'Naw" kids shouted, as they punched whomever was thought to guess (or hope) wrongly.

Alas, none of these 'sights to behold' ever came to pass...and certainly, none ever passed through the magical world of Farmers Oval. Nope, we kids saw...nary a Troop Train. However, if one waits, hopes and truly believes long enough, and uh, lives long enough, then all things, one day, shall surely come to pass! And now...That Day Hast Cometh!

Soooo . . . sixty-five years later and by the marvels of Cyber-space, share with me the thrills, excitement and nostalgia of the long-awaited... Troop Train!

To view this 13 minute Official War Department World War II-era film, go to <http://www.archive.org/details/TroopTra1943> Rather than the movie's center 'Start' icon, look to the left side column under 'Stream', select 'Dial-Up' or 'Broadband' and then your choice. I find 256kb-Real Media (broadband) works well and has a much clearer picture.

Click the film On and increase to Full Screen. Being a public information film, it was probably more directed toward parents and loved ones. Alert: in the closing scenes, when the Troop Train is going cross-country, watch for two notable trains quickly going by!

- Editor's Note: The motorcycles being transported are Harley Davidson model XA. These were direct copies of German BMWs. The story is available here: <http://jeffdean2.home.att.net/h-d.htm>

TREASURER'S REPORT by Richard Zanotti, Treasurer

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IN THE PRINTED
VERSION OF
THE SIDE TRACK**

Show and Tell

By Bill Wilson, Chairman

Show and Tell had a short summer this year due to the heavy activity on the convention. The convention was some event!! Maybe the next time we will have more time to prepare.

Our last S&T was in June where the subject was hand cars. **Lisa** brought several Disney models--Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse and Peter Rabbit. These are always fun to look at. **Pete Keesling** brought a special handcar made by McCoy. Interesting! I brought a Christmas one, a bit out of date for the summer. **Richard** brought a Speeder which, on a stretch, could be considered a handcar.

The Fall season is coming up with September being "Interesting loads for flatcars and hoppers" (See George Ann's email) You will not get this Sidetrack before the September meet but it keeps the S&T list up to date.

Our River City meet takes the place of the October meeting, so no S&T for that month.

For November a good subject is "Special S gauge cars" We need to give those S gauge folks some time. Dig up those special ones!

December is Christmas time so how about "Christmas cars before 1940 (WWII)". If the December meet gets too packed with other stuff we can redo this S&T.

Hope you all had a super summer.

Bill Wilson

TTOS Visits the Roots of Motive Power

Story and photos by John DeHaan



During the Skunk Train Tour on Aug. 11, we took a slight detour and visited the logging museum in Willits, and it turned out to be quite a find for any railroad enthusiast. Located at 420 E. Commercial St., just east of "downtown" Willits, it is affiliated with the Mendocino County Historical Society. The volunteers here have accumulated, restored, and keep in running condition a wonderful variety of equipment from steam tractors, stationary engines, steam cranes, steam shovels, to gasoline and diesel tractors, trucks, and logging equipment of all types from 1880's to the 1940's. The first thing we saw pulling in was a Lima-built Shay locomotive, but in the barn was a Heisler, and in the engine shed – a Climax. All operational.

There is also a very unusual Baldwin 2-6-2 tank loco used on local logging lines, a 1937 Gibson (gas-powered) Crew Car, a Fairmont motorcar (NWP, ca. 1950), speeders and hand cars. For the diesel enthusiasts, there are a GE 44-tonner, an Alco, and others.- all operational! Their 1909 NWP caboose (#13) is fully restored, but their really old cars (flat cars and a box car dating from ca. 1900) are awaiting devotion and MONEY! There is also a Budd-built passenger car from the 50's, awaiting restoration. We got there too late in the day to see any railroad equipment running but one big hit was a 1924 Mack 3-ton dump truck with dual chain drive, solid tires and cast iron wheels. The operator bragged at how easy it was to start even without a starter. Sure enough – a touch on the spark advance, a little choke, and off it went with half a pull! I wish my old cars would start that easily.

This group prides itself on the amount of equipment they have and OPERATE, all on a volunteer basis. They have a wonderful collection that deserves our support. Their next "steam-up" day is THIS weekend – September 6-7. So, if you don't have any plans – Willits is a beautiful 3-hr trip along highways 20 and 101. Well worth the drive!



Convention Commentary

—Looking Back at the Grand Event

By George Ann Hornor



Chuck Brasher and David Dansky discuss an unusual postwar piece
- photo by Jim Groth

Remember when, after a rocky start, we decided to give the attendees from around the country the best convention possible? Well - according to the latest polls, we pulled it off and those of us who supported TTOS and our club can be proud. National got us started by planning a terrific agenda with plenty of tours and activities, and **Randy Giroux** and the national officers put in countless hours putting it all together.

We were lucky to have really, really nice attendees who appreciated our efforts and, for the most part, overlooked the glitches. Here are a couple of quotes - From **Jim Selvius**, TTOS Treasurer: "On a personal note, this was the 7th convention we have attended and I think it was one of the best !! Again, thank you for all of your help and support !!" From **Ken Flory**, president of SP Division: "This was the absolute BEST convention Yvonne and I have ever attended." And don't forget the added bonus - we had fun doing it.

Here are some of the volunteers who carried the load. **Gerry McClellan**, aided by **Jack Dieres**, hauled the boxes of prizes, tote bags, gifts, etc. from Galt to the hotel on Sunday. In his usual calm manner, **John Leins** handled one of the most stressful jobs of all by laying out the table design and making sure the vendors were happy with their space. Oh, he also was a tour bus docent and had his own Marx layout on display. **Bob Remley** did double duty, too, by operating his popular layout with the many accessories and being a docent on one of the Friday night tour buses. **John DeHaan** took the first tour bus to the Skunk train and took the initiative to add a visit to the logging museum in Willits. The other tour bus docents were **Richard Zanotti**, **Jeff Silvera**, **Brian Farnsworth** and **Bob Rhodes**. **Randy Anderson** was everywhere. He worked registration two days and was on hand first thing Thursday morning to help with the set-up. **Tim Taormina**, **Pam Richmond**, **Lisa Stanton** and **Jeff Silvera** also worked registration. **Frank Jablonski** and **Jim Groth** helped wherever they were needed. **Barbara Rohrs** helped **Randy Giroux** and me all through the summer with her advice and convention expertise and helped where she was needed in the hall. **Diane** and **Morgan McKinney** helped with the raffle. **Craig Benner** kept the SVD web page updated with the convention activities. And didn't our layout look great?



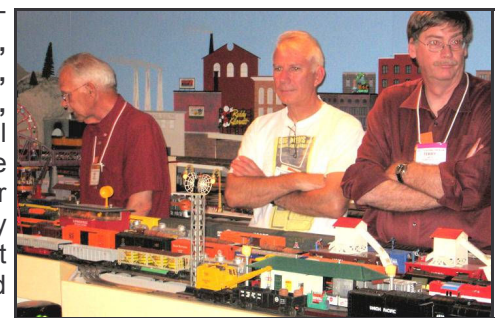
Tim Taormina helps **George Ann** make lemonade for the layout tour visitors - photo by Gerry McClellan

The hosts of the home layout tours deserve special thanks, as do our members who volunteered to help guide people through the homes. More than one person said that our home layouts were the highlights of the convention. **Chuck & Suzie Brasher**, **Dean Busick**, **Mike & Beverly De La Pena**, **Clyde & Erma Easterly**, **Phil & Emma Fravesi**, **Karl & Jeanette Schmidt**, **Chuck & Jeri Stone**, **Pete & Nancy White**, **Bill Wilson & Sandy Davison** and **Jack** and I all got our layouts buffed up, our trains running, our snacks out, our ice chests filled, then put smiles on our faces for nearly 100 guests. In my case, I forgot to change my dirty shirt until halfway through the second busload.



The play area was popular with kids
- photo by Barbara Rohrs

Randy says the final registration number was 256 and the paid public attendance was 350. Both numbers were disappointing to me, but I guess we must consider the economy and the price of gasoline as factors beyond our control.



Fred Albers from Cen Cal, **Bob Krivasic** and **Terry Smith** from Golden State admire **Phil Fravesi's** layout — photo by Jim Groth

Finally, I talked many of you into joining the effort, and I thank you. They thanked me at the banquet with a marvelous gift, but we all know that you folks are the ones that made me look good.



Club Layout News

By Norman LaClair, Layout Chair

The National TTOS convention was again here in Sacramento on August 12 to 17. It was held at the Convention Center in downtown Sacramento.

I am a little bothered by the change from the last convention held here in 1995 which had at least twice as many vendors and the attendance was much higher than it was this year. There was nice attendance from our local club members, but I would have liked to see more. The vendors were not as plentiful as they were in 1995, but the meet was still a good one.

I wish I could list all the members who came and ran trains, but I wasn't there for much of the convention and didn't think to ask for people to log in and list the trains they ran. Suffice to say that many of our members brought a large variety of trains to run and share with the rest of us. Thank you everyone. Next time we'll remember to keep a log.

Brian Farnsworth came in one afternoon with a new purchase and a big grin. He found an Ives #3236 locomotive with two matching passenger cars all in good condition and in the original box.

Our test track was installed and used by attendees about every 20 to 25 minutes. They appreciated that we had it available for their use.

Cen Cal Division of TTOS was there with their large layout. Theirs has two O gauge tracks while our layout has four tracks - two O gauge, as well as S gauge, and Standard gauge. **John Leins** was there with his layout of Marx trains and accessories. He did double duty as he was also in charge of all layouts for the convention. **Dave Thomsen** had one of his layouts there. **Bob Remley** brought his layout with a large variety of working accessories all wired and in working condition. I think I counted 14 operating accessories on his 3 X 8 foot layout, a lot of action in a small space. **Pete Keesling** brought his layout that he installed in his VW bus.

The layout was renovated for the convention. **Curt Darling** towed the layout from Sierra School to his home in Galt in July and, with **Lorra Darling's** approval, set it up in their house. Curt did all manner of repairs and installation of accessories. He had plenty of help with the project. His son **James** put together a beautiful color catalog/instruction guide listing each table of the layout and which goes where. The catalog will stay with the layout. **Lee Deter**, as always, did all sorts of repairs and upgrades. **Ed Strisar** lent his assistance wherever needed. And **Jack Hornor** helped with installing club accessories and wiring the layout to run them. Accessories on the layout now include a barrel loader, crossing gates, a watchtower, a log loader, an ice station, and a semaphore. Other accessories will be added soon. After the convention, **Curt** towed the layout back home for further work. If you would like to help Curt and the rest of the fellas work on the layout, please call **Curt Darling** at (209) 745-0837. We hope that club members are enjoying the new improvements. The layout crew says "thank you" to an understanding wife and to the guys who put in so many hours of work. Great job!

Most of the SVD members were glad to have the convention here in Sacramento again. **Paul Wells** and I personally had a nice time meeting other members of TTOS from out of town. Members who helped set up on Thursday included **Jim Groth, Curt Darling, James Darling, Jack Hornor, Carl Curtis, Norman LaClair, Dave Ashman, Frank Jablonski, Andy DeSmet,** and **Pam Richmond**. I had to leave early, and don't have a list of those who helped take it down. Thank you to everyone who helped with the layout for the convention.

During the convention one of our ZW transformers quit working and we had to replace it. A very nice member of TTOS, **Andy Pedersen**, came over to the layout and gave us a whistle controller (in the box) for use with the new transformer. Andy owns **Andy's Trains** in **Smithfield, Utah**. He can be reached at www.andystrains.com. We really appreciate his gift to us.

SEE YOU ONLINE!

Be sure to see the color version of this Side Track at our website: <http://www.ttos-sv.org/>

Down the track

Upcoming events of interest to SVD members

September 6: SVD MEET - Sierra 2 Center

September 27-28: Great Train Expo, Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, San Jose

October 4: RIVER CITY MEET—Scottish Rite Center

November 1: SVD MEET - Sierra 2 Center(home layout visit)

September 27-28: Founders' Day/Railroad Days, Colfax
(SVD Layout will be in operation)

November 8 - 9: International Railfair Model Railroad Show,
Placer County Fairgrounds, Roseville

November 21-23: Cal-Stewart, Pasadena Convention Center

November 28-30: Train Time for Santa, California State Railroad Museum
(SVD Layout will be in operation)

December 6: SVD Meet - Sierra 2 Center (toy and food charity drive)

December 6-7: TTOS San Joaquin Valley Division Train Show -
Stanislaus County Fairgrounds, Turlock

January 10-11, 2009: Great Train Expo, Cal Expo, Sacramento

