



# THE SIDE TRACK

SUMMER

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society  
Sacramento Valley Division

2009

Jerry Azzaro, editor

## President's Message

by John DeHaan

Well, here we are nearly halfway through 2009 and good things are happening for SVD-TTOS! We just helped make the Scottish Rite meet a big success (see Lisa Stanton's report) and the SVD layout was a highlight for many of the attendees. Curt and the Layout Gang had all four loops fully loaded all day! My thanks to all who helped put up/take down/run trains. Plans are moving ahead to remodel the layout over the winter (after the CSRM Thanksgiving show) We received a mandate via the spring ballot that confirmed the value the layout has for members to operate and for attracting new hobbyists. We have been offered the recently retired Golden Gate Lionel Club modular layout as a new base. We will be checking that offer out very soon.

We have some great layout tours planned for upcoming months (and a special "non-layout" visit to my modest car collection in Vallejo on July 11, 1:1 scale!). Your ideas for future tours and Show & Tell are welcomed. This is YOUR club. What would YOU like to do?

The next (Fall) issue of this newsletter will be the first attempt to circulate The Side Track via email to limit printing and mailing costs. Please bear with us and let me know if you have problems and what you want to see as features. There may be problems with sending full-color versions to dial-up email accounts so we may have to re-tool a bit. Those members who do not have email access will get print copies at the meet or get them mailed. Let us know what you think!

We have had two National TTOS board meetings via teleconference so far and they have been very successful in bashing out solutions to TTOS's problems. The big news is that National's liability insurance covers members and registered guests at our regular monthly meetings (at our regular site). If we host a paid-attendance (i.e., public) event we must get a special rider through National for \$100 per day. All they need is a 30 day minimum notice and HQ will arrange for the

rider. Good deal! (Note that registered guests are covered, that's why we have instituted a stricter badge policy at SVD meets. No badge – no coverage for us!)

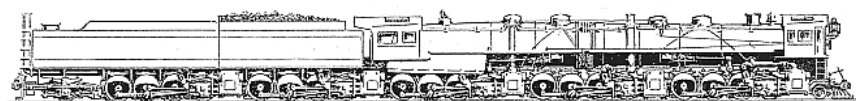
The 2009 National meet is all set for Chicago. The 2010 National set for Vancouver Canada has been moved to San Antonio Texas (too many problems with import duties and new passport requirements for attendees). Membership continues to drop but at a slower rate than in the recent past. We all need to encourage people to join at every train event! We have a fresh supply of new SVD flyers (thanks to **Barbara Rohrs**) so pick up a few and keep them handy for your next show or hobby shop visit. National is working hard to streamline the office operations. The new quarterly renewal scheme and the new card printer are both in place (at last!). **Randy Giroux** has been criticized by some Divisions for the decisions made and failures encountered. He is really dedicated to helping the Club and has the skills and knowledge to make it work but Microsoft bugs can undo the best efforts! The critical point is that if you have a problem with renewals, cards, or any other issue with National, don't just sit and complain to your friends, CALL RANDY and TELL HIM. He cannot fix problems unless he knows about them.

Don't miss the National meet in Chicago – there's still time to plan the trip and get low air fares. Plan now to attend our Scottish Rite meet on October 3 (and volunteer to help!). The LCCA is hosting their National Meet at the Radisson Resort in North Sacramento July 19-25, too, so watch for toy train folks wandering about and show them Sacto hospitality.

We were saddened to learn of the recent passing of long-time SVD member **Bob Smith**. He was a regular attendee and was always willing to share some of his encyclopedic knowledge of post-war Lionel. He will be missed. Our condolences to his family.

Well, in closing have a happy and safe summer. Keep those toy train wheels on their tracks!

John



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# HOME LAYOUT TOURS

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by Jack Hornor, Chairman and SVD Vice President

## Dean Busick Layout Tour - March 7

Wow! What a layout – a vintage Lionel D-291 Dealer Layout integrated into a 16' x 17' modern layout with all the bells and whistles – in other words, the best of the postwar and modern worlds. The system is powered by two MTH Z-4000's and several smaller trans-



formers. The new Lionel Legacy system controls his TMCC-equipped locomotives and accessories. To control conventional locomotives, Dean uses his remote that came with the Z-4000's -

quite a system, and again the best of two worlds. Postwar trains run on the dealer layout while modern trains use the Ross track and switches on the modern layout, to which by the way, Dean has added the new Ross transfer table since our last visit. The day of our visit, Dean was running a Lionel Premium Scale (although three-rail) NYC 20th Century streamliner with a Dreyfus Hudson and a lash-up of two powered diesels pulling a Santa Fe passenger train.



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The artistic touch of the kit-built structures and the dynamic lighting, thanks to Dean's background as a lighting engineer, make this a unique layout to visit. In his night scenes, he can create moonlight from any direction or no moon at all – only train and building lights.



Dean and his sister, **Diane Crabb**, were marvelous hosts, with a lunch of sandwiches and desserts. Even the dog, **Millie**, was friendly and added to a pleasant afternoon under his great lemon tree. Thank you, Dean.

## Future Tours

Here is the schedule for the next few home layout visits.

**July 4** is easy. No meeting - no visit. Our trip on **August 1st** will take us to Loomis to visit the **Rhodes'** layout. Bob has made a lot of changes since the last visit, so be sure to hold this day open. The **September 5** meeting falls on Labor Day weekend, and you are invited to the **Hornor's** in Galt. I realize this makes two layout visits in a row, but the every-other-month scheme doesn't always work out. And of course, we have our River City meet in October.

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## Membership News

By Barbara Rohrs

### WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

**Vic Grube - Don Gueffroy**  
**Ken Hall - Verl Miner**

### DEADLINE

The deadline to renew your divisional dues has passed. If you have not paid your dues as of this date, please do so but remember to add the \$5 late fee. Mail them to: **Barbara Rohrs, 3950 Mack Road - 57, Sacramento, CA 95823**

### TTOS-SVD GONE TEKKIE

Due to rising printing, labeling and mailing costs, it has been decided that The Side Track will no longer be distributed in hard copy format to those members who have email addresses, starting with the next (Fall) issue.

You will receive an email letting you know that the current newsletter has been posted on our web site and providing the link to the site. If a member does not have an email address, a hard copy will continue to be mailed to them.

If you have internet access and e-mail, and you have not yet given us your information, now is the time to do so.



# Meeting Notes

by Phil Fravesi, SVD Secretary

Minutes of April 4, 2009 meeting of SVD of TTOS. July 4, there will be no meeting at the Sierra II. **John DeHaan** will host an open house on July 11 for the club at his home in Vallejo. John has a collection of antique automobiles to share. There will be food and beverages served. Details to follow.

There was a discussion around the cost of publishing the newsletter. It costs about \$200 per issue, which equates to \$800 annually. The division will be pursuing sending the newsletter on line for those with internet access and will mail printed copies to those who don't. The Summer 2009 issue will be the last copy sent to everyone via US mail.

The rent at Sierra II is currently \$3800 annually. Our dues do not offset the rent on the hall and the cost of the newsletter. The club may

have to increase dues or tap into reserves. The lease expires in December of this year. We don't know if they will raise the rent or not. The club is still looking for an alternative site but so far, no other place fits our needs, schedule and most importantly, the cost.

The 2010 national convention scheduled for Vancouver has been moved to San Antonio.

Minutes of Board meeting. **Barbara Rohrs** looking into e-mailing newsletter. **Bryan Stanton** will be taking the new division car to the national LCCA meet in Sacramento. **John DeHaan** to check on free ad in CTT by Weaver and to check on ad in TTOS bulletin.

Minutes of May 2009 meeting. **John DeHaan** was not in attendance. **Jack Hornor** conducted the meeting. Upcoming events were the only thing discussed, so there are no minutes.

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## Yes, Virginia, there is a Steam Engine Demonstrator

Just about everyone who knows **John DeHaan** knows that he has been in search of one of these vintage classroom teaching aids for at least five years. John even had duplicate color photos made of one that he saw in a museum and carried them in his briefcase. He passed them out to everyone he met, asking that they let him know if they ever saw one for sale.

John's quest was answered when **Jerry Azzaro** noticed one for sale on a well-known internet auction site last month. With some skillful bidding (the auction ended at 2:00 in the morning), John now owns the item of his dreams.

Like any good toy train collector, John is now in search of other makes and variations.



*The elusive Steam Engine Demonstrator*

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# BOXCAR JACK'S WEB PICKS

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

## A Lighter View of the LMRRW

Sit back and enjoy watching the "Largest Model Railway in the World".

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PN\\_oDdGmKyA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PN_oDdGmKyA) (link available at the TTOS-SVD website)

In its five minute length, this myriad mileage of track travels the world. From Berlin to Vegas and Hamburg to the Grand Canyon, hundreds of trains high-ball by.. "Rrrright on time". (Might it also have the world's longest bridge?)

Loosen up and enjoy. The numbers, stats and authoritative narration may be a little much, but *"derr vill be no vorry-ing...vee vill not be tested at zee next meeting"*.

I did like the spectacular presentation of 'the World's Largest'...but personally, fellas and gals....does it look like a 'fun' layout to operate? And, when all's said and done...wouldn't you really rather have your own?

Smile....ours is still "just" a hobby!

*(Editor's note: watch for the ceiling-mounted track which carries the camera for the 30-second opening fly-over shot)*

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## SVD Participation at Sac-Sierra TCA Show

**Lisa Stanton** sent these photos (below and following page) taken at the Scottish Rite Center on May 23rd. TTOS-SVD members and our club layout are always well represented at this annual event.







# A MEMORABLE MEMORIAL DAY LAYOUT' by Jack Ahearn



*Dave's camo shirt rounds out the military theme*

One of the most visited and commented upon layouts at the TCA Scottish Rite Show was **Dave Thomsen's** Military Theme Layout. It was a fitting and appropriate Memorial Day exhibit.

Dave is known for his creative and colorfully imaginative small layouts. However, for this G.I. themed pike, instead of bright colors and animated accessories, this one had lots of only one color....Olive Drab, Olive Drab and,....more Olive Drab!

Two complete military trains, including the engines, were painted in that Army "tint". Dave also carefully and artistically applied appropriate decals to all freight cars, engines, jeeps, tanks, "deuce and a halves" and the many other pieces displayed.

One piece stood out, not only because of its lighter prototype color, but for the modeling excellence that went into its construction. Dave had seen an odd piece of equipment on the Military Channel. It was, yes, a tank, but one with no cannon. Instead, it was converted for construction use with a long boom and hook replacing the cannon barrel.

That did it for Dave. Both his imagination and creativity cells lit up fully charged. Piece by piece he gathered the necessary parts, and scratch-built the critical part which made this model tank/crane unique; the elongated boom and hook. Applying the correct paint color and proper decals, he built a Blue Ribbon class scale model!

Good going Dave, your craftsmanship is a fitting tribute for all who have served!



*Dave's unusual tank/crane*

## TREASURER'S REPORT

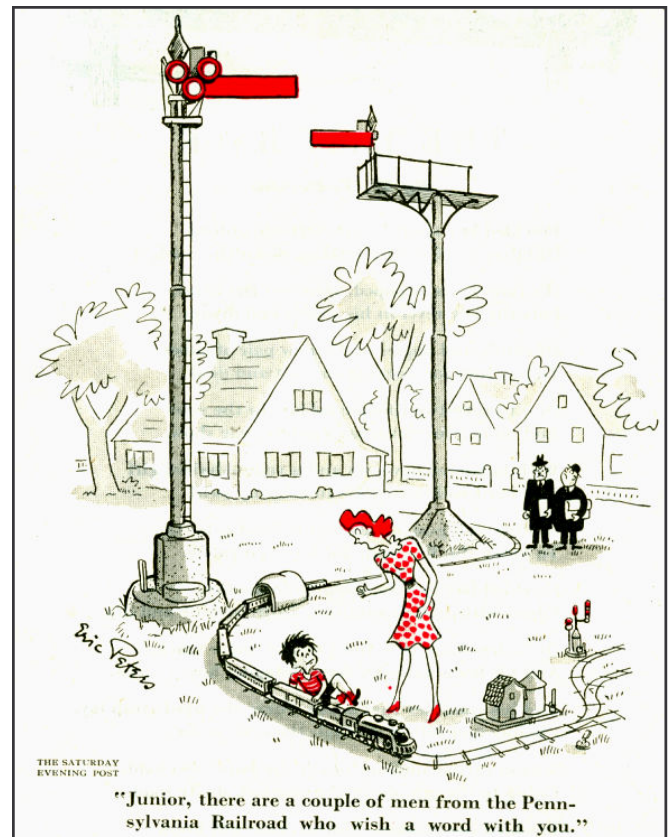
by Bryan Stanton, SVD Treasurer

I have received all payments for the renewing club member dues to date. I hope all of the outstanding people who have not renewed their membership rejoin our club. I have renewed both of our club Certificates of Deposit (CDs) at Bank of America. The first CD was renewed in March at a rate of 2.5%, redeemable with no penalty anytime a better rate is available. The second CD was renewed in May at a rate of 2%, which is better than the default renewal rate of 1% on it and 1.25% for the first CD. The interest on these CDs subsidizes the cost for the Sierra 2 meeting location and the layout costs which dues do not fully cover. I wish I could have negotiated higher rates on these, but that was the best they were offering at the time.

Remember, we have a raffle at our Sierra 2 Club meets of a highly desirable, limited quantity Lionel or American Flyer car from past offerings. Come and see me at the reception desk for tickets for these cars. The tickets are 1 ticket for \$1.00 or 7 tickets for \$5.00. Winner has a choice of either car. In the July 2009 issue of Classic Toy Trains magazine, there is a feature on our Club Car on Page 24. I will have this car for sale at the entrance desk, too. The car sells for \$50.00 plus Ca. sales tax.

The club received a \$25 stipend for operating our layout at the May Sac-Sierra TCA meet.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bryan Stanton, Treasurer



# Show and Tell

By Bill Wilson, Chairman

April featured Your Rarest and Most Memorable Piece. Shown were items by **George Ann Hornor**, **John DeHaan**, **Lisa Stanton**, **Bryan Stanton** and **Richard Zanotti**. Interesting items included books, international cars, a see-through engine and a really old Bing crane. It is always fascinating to see the memorable and rare items that folks collect.

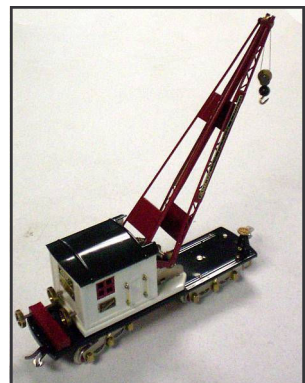
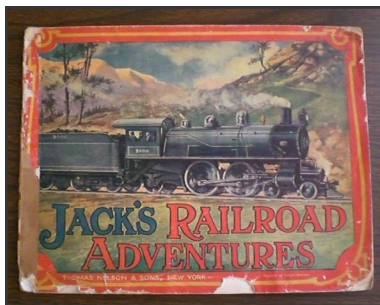
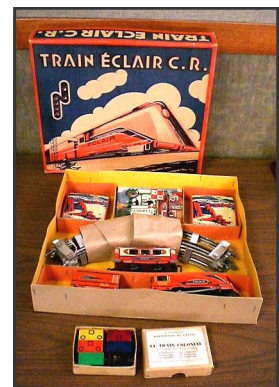
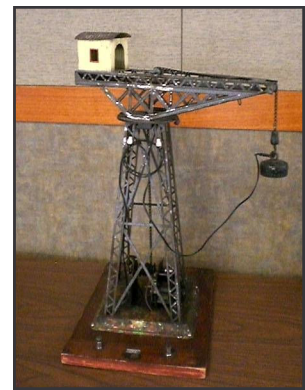
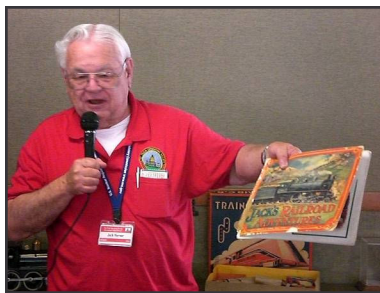
May covered York and Cal-Stewart Finds. **Mark Boyd**, **Tim Taormina** and **Bob Rhodes** brought items consisting of an automatic gateman, very limited K-Line cars and a wide gauge American Flyer crane.

There will not be another Show and Tell until September so enjoy playing with and buying those neat train items. If I am correct and there is a September S&T the subject will be Whimsical/Cartoon cars. If not, this will be the October subject.

Have a great summer!

Bill

## RECENT SHOW AND TELL HIGHLIGHTS



## **Down the track**

Upcoming events of interest to SVD members

**June 6: SVD Meet - Sierra 2 Center\***

**July 4: No SVD Meet**

**July 11: John DeHaan Open House, Vallejo**

**August 1: SVD Meet - Sierra 2 Center\***

**September 5: SVD Meet - Sierra 2 Center\***

**Anytime: Time to enjoy your trains - Your House**

\*meetings begin at 9:30 AM



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