



NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society Sacramento Valley Division

2009

Jerry Azzaro, editor

President's Message

by John DeHaan

I can't believe summer is nearly over (at least by the calendar), and toy train season is building up steam. Our big Scottish Rite event is next month and then the State Rail Museum Thanksgiving show, and then...! This marks our transition to Digital Distribution (otherwise known as email distribution) of the Side Track, so our thanks to **Jerry Azzaro** for the time and energy he has put into making this possible. Our Side Track certainly compares very well to the newsletter of much larger Divisions.

I am just back from the TTOS National Meet in Chicago. It was a modest affair but the tours were great, the hotel was fine and the food there was terrific. The Illinois Railway Museum (at Union IL) is simply awesome, with operating Interurbans, main line diesel, and trolleys of all types. They have a terrific stable of steam (including Three Northerns and a Mallet!) and are working to get several of them back into service. The Museum of Science and Industry was also a very popular tour. The only flaw was poor attendance. We didn't have enough members for a quorum at the business meeting so a lot of issues people hoped to address were simply dropped. A number of registered attendees and vendors dropped out just in the 3 weeks prior to the meet, so there was no way to replace them. Refunds were given, so that will hurt the bottom line.

The Treasurer reported that, as of June 30, 2009, National has some \$44,710 in cash and savings, with total assets (including \$171,000 in car inventories) of \$238,164. This is against reported liabilities of \$29,045. The 2008 Convention posted a final loss of \$13,046. Much of this loss was due to limited attendance (both Club and public) and limited participation in the tours (where there were fixed rental costs). We currently have 4202 members, with 102 added in 2009. This represents a steady decline in membership over the past 5 years as long-time members pass away. We must recruit young enthusiasts at every opportunity. Mall and museum shows, Greatest American Hobby Shows, Boy Scouts, and the like all offer us chances to share the fun.

It is clear that the investments made in Club cars (with Lionel's 500 car minimum order) have not paid off due to limited demand by the MEMBERS! Future TTOS cars may come from Williams (Bachmann) since it is clear we cannot sell 500 cars and Lionel refuses to budge from that minimum. **Randy Giroux** introduced the Roundhouse Sale of past cars and reported that in just 3 weeks, he sold nearly \$10,000 in cars. That ought to improve the bottom line! Members are encouraged to look at that sale flyer in the last Bulletin and get orders in soon. Some cars are already sold out.

Our own limited edition "Inter-Divisional" cars are readily available. Sales at the Chicago convention were dismal so we have

cars and graffiti decals galore. See **Bryan Stanton** or me. They will be available at every monthly meet and at Scottish Rite.

Membership renewals are now fully on the quarterly system and Randy reports that is working well. A new website manager has been chosen so the website will be improved greatly soon (in content and reliability!).

Speaking of the future... The 2010 National meet will be in San Antonio Texas (NOT Vancouver BC as previously announced). The 2011 meet in Charleston SC has been cancelled (due to limited membership in the Southeast). The 2012 meet will be in Santa Clara (co-hosted by the Golden State Division). The locations for 2013-2015 have not been solicited. There are plans for the 50th Anniversary Meet in 2016 to return to the Queen Mary in Long Beach. That was a memorable event and a very successful one for TTOS and the Queen!

In other news, we did have a quorum for the Board of Directors Meeting at Chicago, with a very full and contentious agenda. The short report (as opposed to the 7 hour meeting!) was that President **Brian Fields** erred in holding a teleconference Board meeting to discuss the problems of the SW and CenCal Divisions without notifying SWD President **Larry Pearson**. As a result, it was moved that all decisions made at that meeting were null and void. Suspensions were lifted and remedial actions were voided. That action cleared the air significantly. CenCal Division, however, appeared to have on-going management issues so **Mel Stratton** has volunteered to be acting president (replacing **Marcia Crew**) and has formed a roster of candidates for an entirely new Board. TTOS National has assumed responsibility for the Division until the new Board can be elected.

(When a Division is taken into custodial trust by National, its funds are held in trust until a new division is formed and then that money goes to the new Division's treasury. There are still funds held in trust for the Land of Lincoln Division (which may be reinstituted based on the interest of local members at the Chicago meet), and Texas Division. Funds from the Northeast Division will be turned over to the new Niagara Division.) In local news, the Bay Counties Division started up by **Al Evans** a couple of years ago is struggling. Al's health has not been good and he closed Tin Plate Junction and moved back to the family ranch he managed in South Dakota. The Division met at Tin Plate Junction for operating sessions. **Craig Montoya** has taken the reins for now. Members in the Bay Area are encouraged to contact him.

Mel Stratton has also had major surgery recently and members are encouraged to send cards. Our own **Tom Gibson** is reportedly well on the mend and will be active in the Scottish Rite event. Our liability insurance rider request was very promptly provided by National, so that is ready. The layout will be there with its new MTH Z-4000 transformers, so bring your modern stuff to play with!

I know I have forgotten many things but I have run out of room and I will fill you in soon. See you in October!

HOM€ LAYOUT TOURS

by Jack Hornor, Chairman and SVD Vice President

Bill Wilson and Sandy Davison came through once again for our June layout tour. Bill's "Achin' Back Railroad" was, of course, fun, and Sandy's lunch was delicious. It was a little cooler than had been expected, but most of us were happy to be outside enjoying Sandy's amazing gardens.

The layout room is large enough for two loops with O-72 and greater curves. The Gargraves track, with pre-bent curves, is laid on Homosote roadbed attached to sub-carpeting painted in earth color. This is over plywood, but runs very quietly as the screws and clips do not penetrate the sub-carpet. He currently operates the loops with a postwar ZW. Bill had added several flashing lights and operating accessories since our last visit in 2007. And once again, the star of the show was probably the baseball diamond. "Take Me out to the Ball Game" plays from loudspeakers on the lighted field to entertain fans as they root for their favorite players.

Bill has a great collection of postwar Lionel and modern O-gauge engines and rolling stock. Especially outstanding is his collection of large 3rd Rail brass engines.

Thank you, Bill and Sandy.



Some views of Bill's layout. Photos by Jim Henson, Dwight Martenia and Jack Hornor



On July 11, **John DeHaan** invited the Sacramento Valley Division to his home in Vallejo to see his collection of vintage automobiles. Of his fourteen cars on display, ten of them are running and licensed - an amazing accomplishment for one individual. Most of these cars were not your routine assembly line production cars. His love of racing cars and racing is apparent. John himself raced his 1923 Essex, 1927 Bentley and 1955 MG in vintage race events on the West Coast between 1979 and 2001. Other rare cars include a Railton, a Dolphin, a Jensen GT and a Lotus Elan. The United States is represented by the Shelby Mustang and the Studebaker, both of which resided in the Sacramento car museum for several years, and the 52 Hudson which is under restoration. By the way, John restored eight of the cars himself (the Lotus was restored by a friend). He is always in the process of rebuilding other cars, and the bodies, chassis, engines and parts scattered about would be the envy of any collector. John pointed out that this might be the bane of any potential spouse! Of course, his collection of pre-war trains and toys were on display as well. Several members of TCA Nor-Cal Division also attended and we were all treated to a delicious catered lunch. Thank you, John, for a wonderful day.



Photos from the John DeHaan "Garage Tour" taken by Jim Groth and Jerry Azzaro



John DeHaan and Jack Ahearn pose with John's three Bentleys -Photo by Jim



Visitors enjoy a luncheon served on John's restored railway baggage cart - Photo by Jerry

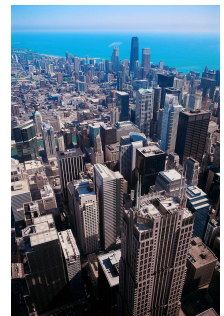


"say cheese" - Jim Groth snaps a photo as John and Jack Ahearn pose among the Bentleys - Photo by Jerry

FUTURE MEETS

The visit to **the Hornors'** after the September meeting will close out the home layout tours for the rest of the year. We have the River City meet coming up; it's time for Show and Tell and running the modular layout in November, and we don't plan extra activities in December. The first 2010 visit will be in February, and I am working on the schedule now. -Jack Hornor

LIMITED EDITION SP EXPRESS CAR



To celebrate TTOS National Meets in Sacramento and Chicago, TTOS-SVD commissioned this custom-number (#5700), O gauge "INTER-DIVISION" car by Weaver. TTOS info on end panels only!

True to prototype, Scale 40' Express Car. Lionel couplers. Die cast trucks and couplers, 3-rail only

The original car was one of 50 built, and saw regular service between Chicago and Sacramento for many years.

Price: \$50 plus tax (Checks payable to TTOS-SVD) Includes graffiti decal as shown above.

Contact **John DeHaan** or **Bryan Stanton**.



BOXCAR JACK'S WEB PICKS

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

Soooooooo...you want realism on your layout? Here's one of the finest examples of O-gauge Hi-Railing I've seen. This six-and-half minute film begins with era-appropriate background music along with atmospheric sound effects. High-lighted are many creative urban mini-scenes. The nostalgic background sounds of Mr. Miller and his Band join in the action as the trains start rolling through dramatic mountain scenery against a convincing sky backdrop. Watching this film closely should inspire those wanting to detail their layout. Sit back, listen, watch closely and enjoy!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8__pRxVSyyw

Oh yeah,.... also grab an umbrella!

Find the link to this and to previous web picks at the TTOS web page: <http://www.ttos-sv.org/BoxcarJack.htm>

Membership News

By Barbara Rohrs

Welcome New Members:

Tom Alger
Jerry Manthey, Sr.

2009 Membership Directories are ready for pick-up at our regularly scheduled Division meetings. If you wish to receive this directory via e-mail, please email me at tjbrr@hotmail.com and I will send it to you in pdf format (Acrobat Reader file).

River City Meet - October 3rd

by Jeff Silvera, Meet Chairman

The River City Meet is coming this October 3rd, just around the corner. We always need volunteers. This is when our Division hosts a great public event, which is also a fundraiser for us.

We will need your help getting the word out. Any kind of publicity or advertising we can get out to the public will help. We will need volunteers at the front desk. Any donations for the door prizes are appreciated. We also need a person or two to stay after the meet and help fold tables and chairs. We always need members to help with our club layout: set-up, taking down and packing up. Most of all, we need operators running trains for the pleasure of our attendees. Please contact me at (916) 481-4694 if you would like to get involved with helping SVD put on the best River City Meet ever,

Remember: **no meet at Sierra 2 on that Saturday, October 3rd.**
See you at Scottish Rite Center.

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Bryan Stanton, SVD Treasurer

It has been a sleepy summer at our monthly TTOS club meets. We added a new member who signed up in July.

Sales of our 2009 club cars are going very slowly. 4 cars were sold at the TTOS National Convention in Chicago, and we sold 6 via the Classic Toy Trains Magazine promo bringing the grand total to 37 cars sold. There are only 274 left. If you have not yet added this limited edition car to your collection, they will be available for purchase at \$50 each plus sales tax at our September 5th Sierra 2 meet. They also make great holiday gifts. Don't miss out; when they're gone, they're gone!

We will be buying 2 brand new MTH Z-4000 transformers for the club layout to run those nice new DCS and TMCC trains. They will replace two Lionel ZW transformers which will be sold to recover a portion of costs of the upgraded new equipment.

The River City Meet at the Scottish Rite is approaching very fast, and I will send a check to TTOS headquarters for the show insurance. They now charge us \$100 to cover this event, but in the past there was no charge to the club. I look forward to income from healthy table sales and a robust attendance gate.

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan Stanton, Treasurer



Club Layout News

By Curt Darling, Layout Chair

Great news everyone! The club just purchased two MTH Z-4000 transformers. We are very excited that we get to start on revamping the layout. Now that we have these two transformers, people who have modern era trains can run their trains without worrying about burning up the electronics in train engines.

I am currently looking for volunteers to help wire accessories for the layout. If you're interested, please feel free to contact me at any meet or through my contact information listed in your club roster.

Also we are currently accepting sign-ups for our River City meet on October 3, 2009. The jobs that we need volunteer help with are: set up and take down, running all assorted train gauges. If you are interested, there will be sign up sheets at the September meeting.

Here is a look at our upcoming events:

T.T.O.S River city meeting: October 3

California State Railroad Museum: November 27,28,29

The Great Train Expo: Jan 9-10, 2010



MTH Z-4000 transformer

Meeting Notes

by Phil Fravesi, SVD Secretary

June 6, 2009 General meeting: The president will assign a sergeant-at-arms for each meeting. There have been people wander in off the street and other functions at the center. This is for the protection of our trains; also our insurance covers members and guest only. The next issue of the Side Track will be on-line and only those without access will receive a hard copy.

The fall meet at the Scottish Rite is October 3. Volunteers are needed for the layout. Contact **Curt Darling** for details and time slots.

July: No meeting

August 1, 2009 General meeting: Reminder of the October meet. Also, need for volunteers for the meet. The home tour was canceled for this month. **Jack Hornor** is checking on a contact for possible repairs to the new Lionel ZW controllers.

August 1, 2009 Board meeting: **Curt Darling** made a presentation for new power units for the layout. The current transformers are not compatible to operate the new computer controlled equipment safely. A motion was made to purchase new MTH Z4000 for approximately \$375.00.

From the **OLD FARMERS ALMANAC**

Submitted by Paul Wells

Q: What is the difference between a locomotive and a hound?

A: One runs on the track, and the other tracks on the run.

No Casualties in Meadow Vista Train Disaster

Paul Wells sent this report and photos direct from the scene of a railroad accident in the Sierra foothills:

Well, it finally happened. Had a great train wreck on my layout. Geary came over to run his new Alaska NW-2's and consist. We were getting ready for the Sac-Sierra TCA BBQ at Kit and Rose's house. We were having a good ol' time when all of a sudden, it happened. My three FM's ran into their own caboose and about 12 cars in front that uncoupled at the station. They knocked the station off its foundation, and took out the middle of Susane's SOO Line consist and knocked a couple of Geary's consist off the track. It sure was spectacular. Only one car suffered any visible damage, that was the wood stack SP flat right in front of the caboose. Had to replace the knuckles on both ends. Other than that everything went great the day of the BBQ.

-Paul



Steam Up in Willits! Story and photos By John DeHaan

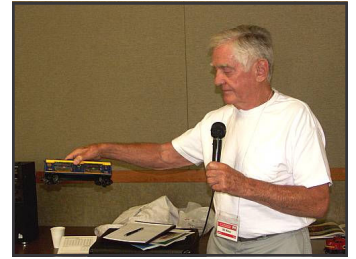
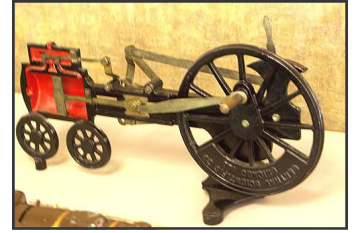
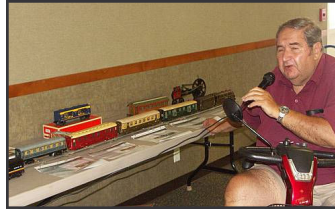
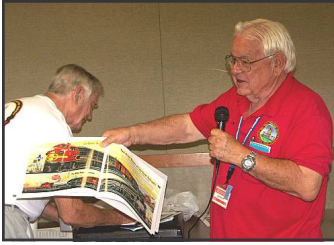


The Roots of Motive Power in Willits will hold its Annual Steam Festival on September 19-20 this year. This great collection of historic railroad and logging equipment (operated in conjunction with the Mendocino County Museum) has the largest assortment of steam-powered equipment anywhere and all manner of it **WILL BE OPERATING** these two days – Steam railroad engines (2-6-2T, Baldwins, GE, Heisler, Shay, Climax and more), stationary engines, steam rollers, steam shovels, and tractors. Train rides on their own loop. And, it is **FREE** Admission. (A barbecue in the park after the festival is available for a donation.) Also: Early Days Gas Engine and Tractor Association show, and vintage cars.

Saturday and Sunday: 10AM-4PM
420E. Commercial St, Willits (about ¾ mile EAST of Hwy 101 in central Willits).
Info: 707-459-4350 or 459-2600 or www.rootsofmotivepower.com.



RECENT SHOW AND TELL HIGHLIGHTS



“Side Track” Enters the 21st Century

by Jerry Azzaro, Side Track editor

This issue of the Side Track is the first ever that will not have been printed on paper for mass distribution. To reduce costs, the decision was made to post the ST online and to use our e-mail distribution list to notify members when it is available.

Things have come a long way since I took over this job from **George Ann Horner** in 2000. When I agreed to serve as editor, I didn't know that I would also be the compiler, publisher, printer, collator, folder, labeler, sealer, hander-outer, stamp licker and mailer. I honestly do not know how George Ann did it all. She made it look easy. (I understand that **Jack Ahearn** helped out.)

In the beginning, I would create the 6 or 8 pages on my computer, then print them out and take them to Kinko's to photocopy onto on 11 x 17" sheets. I would collate and fold it at home and bring it to the meeting to pass out, then mail copies to anyone not in attendance using labels provided by George Ann. Kinko's raised their fees, so I switched to Office Depot. Their copy machines were inferior, and I often had to clear paper jams myself, getting coated with copy toner up to my elbows.

Eventually, George Ann found a small print shop in Galt which was willing to do our newsletter for a reasonable price. This was the best thing since knuckle couplers! I could now create the Side Track and convert it to a file which could be sent over the Internet to the print shop. Jack and George Ann would then pick up the finished job and bring it to the meeting for distribution. I could do the Side Track without leaving home.

This latest change makes the job even easier. Up until now, I had to create two Side Tracks; one in color for the web page, and one monochrome for the print shop. Now, only a color version is needed.

The job of editor would not be possible without the cooperation and input of the many authors whose names you see throughout this newsletter. I am sincerely grateful for their contributions. I encourage every member to submit anything which may be of interest to our readers. All are welcome.



Down the track

Upcoming events of interest to SVD members

September 5: SVD Meet - Sierra 2 Center*

October 3: River City Toy Train Meet, Scottish Rite Center

October 10-25: Pumpkin Patch Trains, Western Railway Museum, Suisun

November 7: SVD Meet - Sierra 2 Center*

November 14-15: International Railfair Model Railroad Show,
Placer County Fairgrounds, Roseville

November 20-22: Cal-Stewart Meet, Pasadena

November 27-29: Train Time for Santa, California State Railroad Museum

November 28-29: Great Train Expo, Alameda County Fairgrounds, Pleasanton

December 5: SVD Meet, Christmas Party, Sierra 2 Center*

December 5-6: TTOS San Joaquin Valley Division Train Show,
Stanislaus County Fairgrounds, Turlock

January 9-10, 2010: Great Train Expo, Cal Expo, Sacramento

*meetings begin at 9:30 AM

