



# THE SIDE TRACK

SUMMER

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society  
Sacramento Valley Division

2010

Jerry Azzaro, editor

## President's Message

by John DeHaan

It can't be June already, can it? The New Year nearly half gone. Spring Scottish Rite behind us. National Meets (of all stripes) ahead of us. Waiting for the bank accounts to recover from our spring purchases so we can be ready for the October Meet. Here we are! The new Elk Grove venue has turned out really well and attendance grows with every session.

The big news from TTOS National is that they are holding their own, apparently. Their Roundhouse Sale is still on (check the website for current availability). They have moved offices, (effective May 17) presumably to save on rental costs and travel time for **Randy** and **Brian**. The new physical address is: 1111 E. Commonwealth, Unit F, Fullerton CA 92831 and the mailing address is now P.O. Box 6710, Fullerton CA 92834. The phone number is now (714) 449-9391 and the fax is (714) 449-9631. This move was not discussed with the Board but there had been general discussion of a move to reduce overhead. There has been no Board reaction following the announcement last month by President **Brian Fields** that it would cost over \$50,000 to cancel the contracts for the 2011 National Convention in Charleston SC. I think everyone was shocked at the projected cost. At this point, it looks like it will go ahead.

On a happier note, plans for this year's convention are well in place. The Crowne Plaza on San Antonio's Riverwalk is a great venue. There will be two days of historical and railroad tours and two evenings of home layout tours. The hotel still has great rooms available at the TTOS rate of \$129/night. (Use the link at the TTOS.org website or call). Southwest flies there (with only one stop!) for \$278 round trip, too!

Closer to home, if you haven't seen the toy train collection at Cal State University - East Bay (Hayward), it is

open until June 11 and it's FREE! See the announcement in the last issue of Side Track for details.

CSRM is hosting reservation-only tours for members on June 15 of the "new" historic SP locomotive shops in Sacramento. If you aren't a member, you should be!

Yours truly spent the weekend of April 10-11 in Willits, attending the annual Steam Engineering and Operations Safety Class at the Roots of Motive Power. It was two very full days of classroom AND operating sessions. There were 26 attendees and we got to fire and operate: a stationary steam logging "donkey" engine, a Buffalo-Springfield steam roller (ca. 1905) and an Ohio loco crane (self-propelled 30 ton crane ( a ca. 1915 predecessor to the Burro crane). We all got cab rides in the Mason County Logging 2-6-2T loco (but not drive it). That loco is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday this month! This class is open only to RoMP members (at \$35/year) and costs \$75. They also offer a two-day railroad operations and safety course for the same cost. I hope to take that this year. Plan to attend the big annual steam festival there this year September 11-12. Everything (steam) that is operational will be running! From small engines to huge steam shovels.

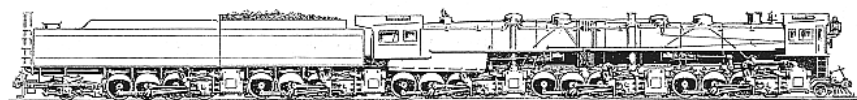


*Caution: student driver*

Don't forget our own Scottish Rite Meet in October.

Finally, it's not too early to start planning for next year's events. We ran out of time this year to plan a picnic or road trip for July! My plan to bring railroad historian **Walt Wilson** in to give a lecture on the 1973 Roseville ammunition train explosion was derailed when Walt realized that our meeting time on July 3 conflicted with his plans to attend O-Scale West. He asked if he could postpone our lecture until the Fall. I will be out of the country for the September meeting so we will see if he can make it in November (I don't want to miss this one!)

That's all for now. Get those trains out and PLAY!



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# HOM€ LAYOUT TOURS

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by Jack Hornor, Chairman and SVD Vice President

## Tony and Nancy Basile

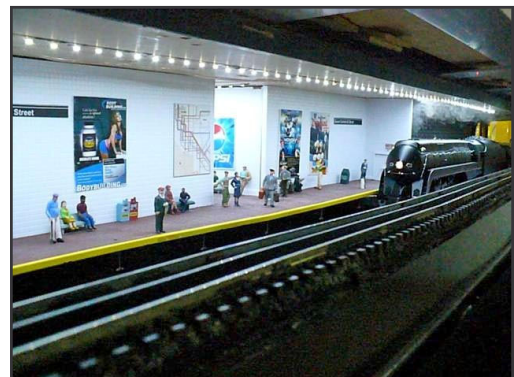
On March 6, we traveled to El Dorado Hills to see the **Basile** layout. Many wives I know would love to have this setup – a hobby that involves her entire family and which can be moved out of the way when not in use. This layout is truly spectacular with its clever design and exquisite modeling. Located in a three-car garage, the multilayered, high-rail layout is built on a sixteen by eighteen steel table with legs on rollers. When in use, it is possible to walk completely around the table. When not in use, the entire layout can easily be covered and pushed aside so that two cars can be accommodated in the same garage.

In his state-of-the-art layout, **Tony** has used Atlas track with some Ross switches. It is powered by a Lionel ZW and an MTH 4000. Every engine is either a Lionel Legacy/TMCC or Mike's Train House DCS - PS2, and each has cruise control (also known as Engineer on Board). There are four continuous, independent loops, although ones on the same level are interconnected. The largest curves are 81 inches, with none smaller than 63 inches in diameter and the track is ballasted where visible. It is possible to work on all four sides of the layout, as well as in the center through removable access holes hidden in the scenery.

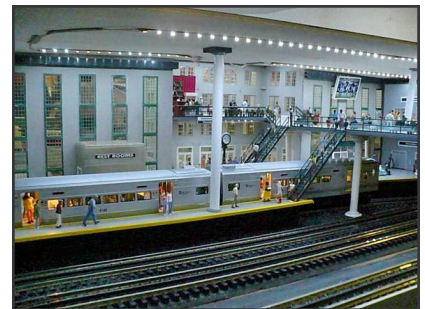
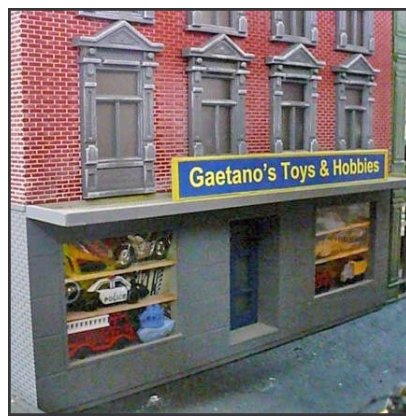
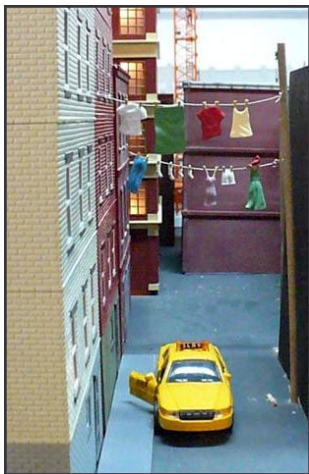
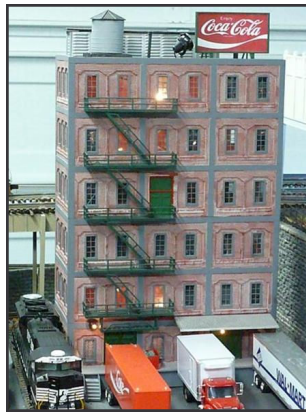
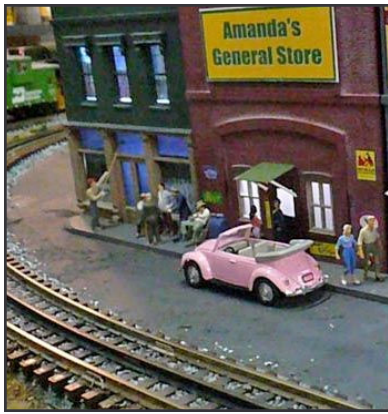
Those of us who attend monthly club meetings and train shows are familiar with **Gaetano's** artistic skill, and that afternoon we found that it's definitely a family trait. As we admired the superbly modeled buildings and industrial areas with the many wonderful little scenes, we found that it is indeed a family project. Tony was quick to point out that Nancy is always involved, as of course are **Gaetano** and **Amanda**. Tony's daughter, **Candi**, designed Grand Central Station, the centerpiece of the layout. At first glance, the layout is amazing, but as you look at the many activities with people, cars, bicycles ... and on and on and on. Even the insides of the tunnels were finished and lighted. Oh, there were trains, too, and an awesome crane.

To top it off, we were served a delicious lunch. We certainly thank **Tony** and **Nancy** for a great afternoon. Wow.

## PHOTO GALLERY - BASILE LAYOUT TOUR







Home Layout Tours  
continues next page





## Home Layout Tours (Continued from previous page)

### Jack and George Ann Hornor

In May, we invited the club to visit the GASP railroad in Galt. It's awkward to write about your own layout, so we're not. Craig Owens, along with three other North Bay TCA members, came down from Santa Rosa and here's the message he sent out to his list of train friends:

*"Well, you didn't ask for it, but I can't stand to see perfectly good electrons just go to waste, so I'm sending these pictures of a couple of model railroad layouts we toured Saturday."*

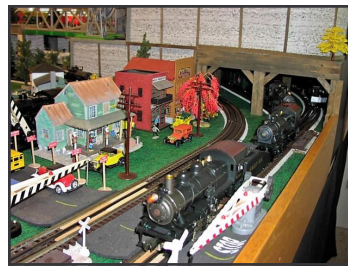
*"The first layout was **Jack and George Ann Hornor's**, over in Galt. They hosted an open house on Saturday for members of their model railroad club, but we got there a little late. No problem ... Jack fired it all up for us and George Ann had more stuff set out for snacks than we could deal with. Both of them are enthusiasts, and apparently, it's their main madness ... the whole house was filled with train stuff. First thing that greeted you when you walked into the house was the giant layout, which took up the whole living room. Jack is a retired nuclear engineer, so there were little nuclear things all over the layout. Amongst other things, he had a couple of operating nuclear reactors ... one by Lionel, and the other, a vintage tin plate item made by Marx back in the fifties. There were funny little nudges everywhere you looked ... a favorite was a take off on the 'Ol Honest John's Used Cars, except this was a sales lot full of outhouses and a sales office with the sign "Honest Karr's Used Johns." See what happens when people get old and retire?"*

*"On the way home, we detoured by way of Woodland to see another train guy – **Dave Thomsen**. Dave lives in a double wide mobile home, and he had that baby packed with train stuff, model cars, toy tractors, and other models like 10 pounds of you-know-what in a 5 pound bag. It was fun. He started off with the story of him growing up in Nebraska, and, as a 12 year old, getting to drive his dad's newly-purchased John Deere 60 tractor to their farm from the dealer in 1956. A 13-mile trip, with his dad following in the pickup truck, which was guaranteed to insure his life-long interest in tractors and machinery. Woodland is home to the Hayes Truck and Tractor Museum, so he's in a good location to keep scratchin' that itch."*

We thank Craig for letting us use his words.

Jack and George Ann

## PHOTO GALLERY - HORNOR LAYOUT TOUR



# Show and Tell

By Bill Wilson, Chairman

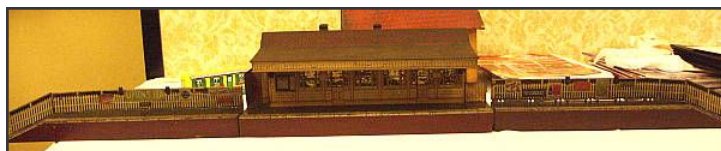
**Jack Hornor** conducted the April Show and Tell with the following notes.

**Richard Zanotti** brought a mystery station that, according to the group, is probably a 1905 Carotte English country-side style metal station. This is a very rare and a nice find. **Bryan Stanton** displayed an early composition board station manufactured by Schoenhut for Lionel about 1915. This was also a very nice find. **George Ann Hornor** brought the Marx Lumar Dinor. **Jerry Azzaro** had seen it on her layout and asked why it was spelled "Dinor" instead of Diner. **John Liens** brought an old TCA quarterly with the explanation. Early on, Marx had their manufacturing facility in Girard, PA, and it was the local custom around Erie and Girard to use that spelling, so Marx followed the prototype.

The June 5th Show and Tell will be "Interesting finds at Cal-Stewart and York" Due to summer vacations there will be no Show and Tell in August. With a layout tour in September and the October Grass Valley activity, the next S&T will be November. Give some thought to Show and Tell desires!

Have a fun summer (if it will finally warm up).

## RECENT SHOW AND TELL HIGHLIGHTS



## 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!

**Limited time price reduction: \$35 or three for \$100 plus tax, available at our monthly meets**



# BOXCAR JACK'S WEB PICKS

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

This issue's pixels comes to us from **Stan Salzman**! Stan was thoughtful enough to send this along; I thank him for it, and I'm sure you will as well. It's a shorty but has some really dramatic footage.

go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHqdiTRGtRc> \*



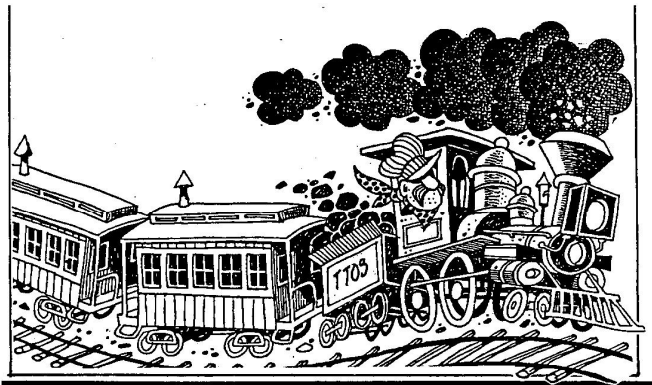
Image Copyright © Jose Lopez

Watch the crew of the other train bail out just before they get hit! This is a crew's worst nightmare, besides the close calls at the crossings. Watch the signals for the train that was suppose to take the siding. The train that appears to be standing still on the mainline was not standing still.

The engineer either failed to stop in the clear and was still moving forward or after he stopped, he may have mistakenly released his brakes and some slack rolled out of the train and pushed his locomotive forward. At any rate, that did not happen until the other train was within a few feet of the signal - that is why you see the signal drop double red just as they go by it.

The approaching train crew had absolutely no warning that the other train had fouled the siding.

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



## Steamin' to San Antonio

**2010 TTOS NATIONAL CONVENTION  
TUESDAY THRU SATURDAY, AUGUST 3-7, 2010  
IN BEAUTIFUL SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

*Our host hotel is the Crowne Plaza on the River Walk.*

*The room rate is \$129.00 for a single or double.*

*The hotel direct phone line is 210-354-2800, or 1-800-972-3480.*

*You must mention that you are booking for the*

*TTOS National Convention 2010*

*when you call for reservations.*



# Meeting Notes

by Phil Fravesi, SVD Secretary

March 6, 2010

Meeting of the general membership called to order.

**Bill and Barbara Phillips, Terry Miller and Justin Wescott** were introduced as new members.

Guests: **Chris Shelgren** and **Bruce Gripkey**.

Discussion regarding meeting locations. April will be at the Holiday Inn. There is no contract for May or June. **Curt Darling** is working on a contract for that period of time.

A motion was made and approved by a unanimous vote for **Curt** to negotiate with either hotel for the remainder of the year @ \$300.00 per month.

Discussion around National's finances. Membership is down. There was further discussion about SVD incorporating but the insurance was still a big issue.

Board meeting:

Discussed National's situation and the pitfalls of incorporation, insurance, tax exemption and liability of the club and officers.

**John DeHaan** to ask more questions regarding National's financials with National Board at the next phone meeting.

April 3, 2010

Meeting of the general membership called to order.

There were no guests.

Future meetings will be at the Holiday Inn or across the street at the Hilton. Sierra II has not started re-model work yet.

A photo album of the Sacramento Division was donated by **Pat and Barry Menges**. It is currently with **Phil Fravesi** for safekeeping.

Regarding the National Board meeting via phone:

National owes Lionel a balance of \$25,000.00 for the convention car.

Incorporation may not protect our assets.

Insurance is the biggest benefit we receive from National.

Motion by **Pete White** to pursue incorporation, seconded, motion carried.

May 1, 2010

Meeting of the general membership called to order.

Guest: **Geary Musselman**.

**John DeHaan** asked for show of hands interested in a guest speaker regarding the Roseville Ammo train

explosion in April 1973. There was a positive response so **John** will try to make arrangements for the July 3 meeting.

**John** presented information about insurance. General liability is available for approx. \$750.00/year and insurance for property, layout, etc. Also, coverage for the officers is approx. \$1250.00/year.

During the National phone board meeting, it was learned that it would cost \$54,000.00 to cancel the 2011 convention in North Carolina.

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## Treasurer's Report

by Bryan Stanton, SVD Treasurer

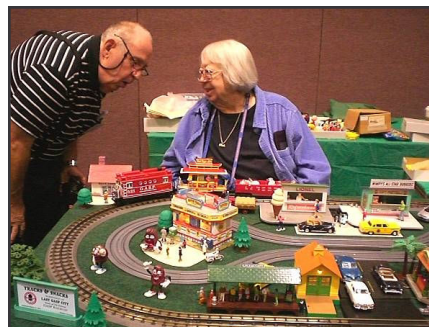
I wrote checks to the Holiday Inn to secure the club's meeting space for the rest of the year. Other than that, there's really nothing new to report on our club financials. I hope everybody has renewed their dues by now.

Club cars are always for sale, see me for them. We have a surplus of the Weaver SP Express Baggage cars, also have a supply of the Lionel 6-52009 TTOS WP 6464-1993 Boxcars, and the Lionel 6-52057 TTOS WP 6464-1995 Convention Boxcars. All of these cars are priced at \$35 each.

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## 2010 Cal-Stewart Santa Clara Event

As usual, SVD members were well represented among the hordes of toy train lovers at the annual event.



*Above: Larry Carpenter, VP of the SP Division, chats with George Ann Hornor at the Spring 2010 Cal-Stewart meet. Jack and George Ann displayed their small layout at the meet.*

## **Down the track**

Upcoming events of interest to SVD members

June 26 - July 5: O Scale National Convention, Santa Clara

July 3: **SVD Meet - Holiday Inn Express, Elk Grove\***

July 17-18: Great Train Expo, San Jose

August 3-7: TTOS National Convention, San Antonio TX

**August 7: SVD Meet - Holiday Inn Express, Elk Grove\***

**September 4: SVD Meet - Hilton Garden Inn, Elk Grove\***

\*meetings begin at 9:30 AM