



THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

SPRING

from the Toy Train Operating Society

Sacramento Valley Division

2012

Jerry Azzaro, editor

President's Message

by John DeHaan

Welcome to Spring (even though we didn't have much winter).

We have been off to a slow start in 2012. We skipped our January meet thinking we'd see everyone at Cal Expo, and then our layout was "disinvited" at the last minute. We had a fine meeting in February followed by a nice visit to see the collections of **Lisa and Bryan Stanton**. We had a meeting scheduled for March 3rd, then discovered that Cal-Stewart was going to be on that weekend (and a lot of our members are going there!) and when we tried to re-schedule, the hotel was already booked for the 10th. So PLAN NOW for APRIL 7th. We have lots to talk about!

National News: There have been no board meetings since October (and no financial statements), and the voting results (originally due January 15th) have not been released. Since there was only one nominee for each position, I guess the results were foregone but it would be nice (and proper) to post the results. Don Kyle will be the new president (Silver State Division) replacing Brian Fields, but he is not supposed to take office until the National meet in August. The "old" National Executive Board met (without announcement) on December 26th and decided to terminate Randy Giroux's paid position as Executive Director, effective immediately. He declined to take a 12 hr/wk office job there, so his son, Anthony, will be doing what he can 3 days per week, 10AM to 2PM. He will process membership requests, process renewals, and sell the cars in stock. (I sent him an email to see how he was doing and it took 10 days for a response - but he did respond, and will process my order for club cars.) The Division Presidents were advised of these decisions by email on December 28th. I sent an email response a couple of days later expressing my dismay and displeasure. On February 6th, the Division presidents all received a letter from Brian telling us that TTOS National was in debt to Bachmann and Lionel for the Charleston convention cars to the tune of \$27,000. Many of us (600) ordered convention cars and were wondering where they were! National now claims they do not have enough money to pay for the cars or their postage. Bachmann was supposed to provide the O-gauge cars in exchange for advertising space in the Bulletin. They need \$3,000 to get the next issue of the Bulletin out (which we haven't seen in quite a while). Brian was asking Divisions to give National a total of \$40,000 or they will declare bankruptcy. A bankruptcy court would expect some coverage from all the Divisions (except for SW and SP, which are incorporated separately).

All this was a terrible shock to us since the last information we had (last October) was that they were going to clear 2012 in the black. I now regret having passed on such erroneous information to all of you in past meetings and Side Tracks. I expect to meet with the presidents of the Cen Cal, Golden State, and San Joaquin Divisions at Cal Stewart, and your Board will be meeting there as well to discuss what our options are. Brian has scheduled a teleconference National Board Meeting for 2PM on Sunday March 4th so there won't be any information I can pass along until after you see this issue. I now regret we did not go forward with incorporation as a 501(c)3 corporation as we discussed a couple of months ago (mostly because getting liability insurance was going to be an expensive hassle). Well, we now face a much bigger hassle!

On to better news: Without the services of an Executive Director, it is going to be nearly impossible for National to carry out all the services they promised Divisions in connection with National meets. J. Keeley, the new president of SP Division, is taking up the reins, but THIS YEAR'S National Meet is going to be in our back yard on AUGUST 8th-12th. We have already voted to help Golden State make it a really good show! They have already arranged for tours to Roaring Camp on the 8th, Niles Canyon on the 9th, Kelly Park & Tech Center on the 10th, and Winchester Mystery House on the 11th. Bob Krivacic has asked for volunteers to staff registration, serve as greeters, set up sales tables, set up auctions, guide local tours and layout tours, and be docents. They also need help with publicity and promotions. Please contact him NOW at bobkrivacic@hotmail.com or J. Keeley at james_keeley@verizon.net (or 714-842-8190). This is a great chance to take in some of the not-so-local places, meet new people, and help out our neighboring Division. Our layout has been invited to be a centerpiece there and we need operators as well as set-up and take-down people.

Our layout was supposed to be at Cal Expo in January and the organizers there called just 3 days before and cancelled the invitation, saying they did not have room. We had a crew all set and no place to go! My appreciation to all those who were planning on this show, as it is great exposure for our club. Our next event is the TCA Scottish Rite Memorial Day weekend. So, contact Curt Darling and get your name on the list - we always need operators and crew.

Well, that ought to do it. See you perhaps at Cal-Stewart and for sure on April 7th. I hope I have better news then. But keep playing with those trains in the meantime!

Home Layout Tours

by Jack Hornor, SVD Vice President and Layout Tour Coordinator

On Saturday, February 4, 2012, after the TTOS-SVD meeting we were all invited to the beautiful residence of Lisa and Bryan Stanton for a real treat of an outstanding home, wonderful snacks and a unique collection of trains, especially prewar (WWII). Not only were there two train rooms but also an Interail Ceiling Mounted System of double track (O gauge and G gauge) running through four rooms, the kitchen, dining room, living room and family room. The Atlas track runs through tunnels from room to room just below the ceiling and is powered by a Lionel ZW and a Crest Hobby transformer located in the living room. The system is manually operated. This ceiling layout is about 20 feet on a side with a total of about 80 feet of track for each loop.

There were two operating layouts both about 5 1/2 by 5 1/2 feet in size, one in each train room. It would appear the one train room is Bryan's and the other Lisa's because her collection included one of the layouts but was strictly a clockwork (windup) layout with no electricity present, very unique and cleverly done. In this room there were many clockwork sets from the 20's and 30's still in their original boxes. These were both European and American complete with track. Lisa's prewar hand-car collection was also in this room.

In what appeared to be the main 34 by 15 foot train room where the other operating layout was working,

were what appeared to be Brian's collection of great prewar and postwar trains. this collection included items rarely or never viewed by our members like an original Lionel 700K Hudson Kit still in it's six original boxes never assembled. and right along side was an assembled Lionel 700K Hudson. There were many rare pieces like 3 original Hell Gate bridges, many original boxed Lionel prewar standard gauge sets that looked like they just came off of the shelf, and lots prewar accessories also in great condition.

The Layout, although small, was Standard gauge and just crowded with wonderful early accessories. The operating train was a replica made by Mike's Train House (MTH) and operated with the latest digital DCS remote control which allowed it to run at extremely slow realistic speeds. This room according to Brian will eventually be a wall to wall train layout, but like all train collectors and operators he would not give us a future date of completion.

The entire afternoon was overwhelming and everyone who was there enjoyed themselves and the great camaraderie, great food and great trains. Therefore, a great big "thank you" is due to **Lisa and Bryan Stanton** for an exciting afternoon. A small plug for Bryan now is that most of his collection is for sale but better than that he has a large collection of original prewar parts, not repros, some even from Madison Hardware for sale also. So if you need anything along these lines let him know. Thank you again for a great time.



Bryan shows off the layout in Lisa's "windup" room



Q: How can you get a good photo of a person operating a ceiling layout?

A: You can't. Bryan's head is barely visible.

Layout Tours continue next page



Layout Tours (continued)



Bryan commands the big MTH Standard Gauge train with DCC, sound and plenty of smoke



Jack Hornor admires the accessories on the Standard Gauge layout

Some views of Bryan's layout/collection room:



This time, Jack explores the connection between trains and the occupants of the Oval Office (was the Oval design inspired by toy train track?)

BOXCAR JACK'S WEB PICKS

Jack Ahearn combs the Internet, looking for great train stuff to share with us . . .



PRESIDENT
OF THE
UNITED **S**TATES

AKA

P O T U S

I don't know if the Baltimore & Ohio dispatcher in 1833 used the term "**POTUS**" when Andrew Jackson rode from Ellicott's Mills to Baltimore. It stands for "President Of The United States" and train dispatchers since then used it right up to the space age. Our highest elected executives were avid train riders for over one hundred years. Their trips meant special crews, pilot trains, guarded bridges, best grade of coal, spiked switches and rights over all other trains.

In the midst of this year's political and heated rhetoric, with its cries of Doomsday and 'End of America as we knew it' drum beating...let's chill out and tune out the incessant dire warnings and for a while, become politically neutral. In this feature story we'll take a lighthearted look at how our previous Leaders handled their goings and comings, their election campaigns and even...for some...their "last journey."

What's all this to do with trains and railroads? Read on...and you'll learn the (sometimes) truth of Presidential facts, figures, foibles, legends and even uncover some 'mysteries'. All aboard our Presidents' Private Trains!

Continued next page



Web Pick (Continued)

Let's start with one of the longest ongoing, mostly speculative, tales of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel's "Mystery Track 61". Deep within the bowels of New York's Grand Central Station can be found the "secret" elevator that magically and majestically transported Franklin Delano Roosevelt skyward to the Presidential Suites, high above...Track 61! Some tales of this heavenly launch suggest that FDR even remained in his armored Pierce Arrow bulletproof limo while being driven directly to the door of his suite! Note: If this corridor car-eening behemoth did perform such a feat - as a former Hotelman, I cringe at the replacement costs of maids' carts during his Weekend at The Waldorf!

Sssssh . . . take a peek at the actual street entrance to the *mysterious* Track 61 and its *secret* Elevator:

Grand Central Terminal, Waldorf-Astoria platform

This is the elevator door at 101-121 East 49 St, New York City:



Many famous leaders have depended on rail for their transportation: President Franklin D. Roosevelt was a leading example. He traveled on a special car built by the Association of American Railroads and sold to the White House for \$1.00. It had two elevators to lift his wheelchair, an office, lounge, bedroom and galley. The floor was 12" reinforced concrete; the windows bulletproof, and the armor plated sides were designed to resist an artillery shell. There was even a submarine escape hatch in case the car was under water.

A light hearted reread of the above may raise some eyebrows...in particular; the feature that would allow for a submarine rescue! Unless the Presidential Limo had been carelessly driven off either the Santa Monica or the Coney Island Piers, one might question the access to an inland waterway to Utah's Great Salt Lake or Missouri's Lake of The Ozarks. Let's skip the Rio Grande and the resulting specter of an International Incident!

Incidentally; Roosevelt was not the greatest with tips for his porter. He usually gave the porter \$5.00 for a trip to Hyde Park. One porter used seniority to get reassigned to the Press car where he usually got forty to fifty dollars.

Let's take a look at some of our earlier Presidents. You all know the more popular tales, so now we'll just get a taste of some of their earlier "oops" and "wows":

Continued next page



Web Pick (Continued)

LINCOLN: Was a railroad lawyer for the Rock Island and the Illinois Central. He is still famous in legal circles for establishing the rights of railroads to bridge navigable rivers. During his Presidency, he signed the legislation implementing the Transcontinental Railroad. (That's a "Wow")

GARFIELD: After being shot in 1881, he requested to go to his summer home in New Jersey. Rail workers constructed special tracks to his beach house. He stayed there 13 days before he died. (An "oops")

McKINLEY: When shot in 1901, a specialist was sent from New Jersey to Buffalo via the Lackawanna. He never made it in time despite almost a mile a minute pace. His Vice President, Theodore Roosevelt, was rushed by train from North Creek, N.Y. (An "oops" and a "wow")

Coolidge: During the 1920's, Connecticut rails saw many trips by President Calvin Coolidge. As well as the usual steps in moving a President, arrangements were made to slow down the train during meals in order that the Presidential party might eat in comfort. (That's an oops.)

Truman: was once a Santa Fe timekeeper. (That's a maybe "wow")

Eisenhower: Once said his boyhood idol was a locomotive engineer. It was only fitting that his 1969 final journey from Washington to Abilene, Kansas be by rail. The Baltimore & Ohio coordinated the almost 1,400 mile/almost 36 hour movement. The funeral train was headed by 3 E8's and consisted of ten cars. (Neither an "oops" or "wow")

Between the early 1960's and the present, except for the following several items, there was minimal Presidential railroad activity.

A Sad Train Order (New York Central)

25 NOV 1963...ORDER #201..."ALL TRAINS WILL CEASE OPERATIONS BETWEEN 1159 AM and 1201 PM MONDAY NOV 25 REGARDLESS OF WHERE THEY ARE ON A CROSSING INTERLOCKING OR HILL

1990: On October 23, 1990, President George Bush visited the Connecticut cities of Waterbury and Stamford to campaign for fellow Republicans. He flew from Washington to Westchester County Airport in White Plains, New York. He then proceeded by motorcade to Waterbury then on to Stamford.

His visit closed parts of three Interstate highways and disrupted thousands of commuters and other travelers. Even assuming he could not be coaxed into "flying" AMTRAK from Washington, Metro-North (a rail commuter line) could have provided a better visit as far as Connecticut residents were concerned.

2009: Tracing Lincoln's path to his inauguration on January 17, 2009. President Elect Obama takes an Amtrak charter train from Philadelphia to Washington. He stops in Delaware to pick up Joe Biden, the Vice President Elect. His train was led by Amtrak P42s #44 and #120. How symbolic; Forty Four for the 44th President and 1/20 is January 20....his inauguration date!

LASTLY: Now that I've hopefully whetted your curiosity, scroll back up and click on those shiny brass doors at 101-121 East 49th St and learn all about "The Waldorf Siding" and the six-foot wide elevator that could lift 6,000 pounds!

BONUS 'must see'... hundreds of vintage railroad stations can be found at:

<http://sh1.webring.com/people/bk/king5021/Railroad/RailwayStation.html>

Visiting this site offers inspiring pictures of early rural rustic stations and the big city terminals as well!

Also, check out:

<http://www.columbia.edu/~brennan/abandoned/gct61.html>

for more on the life and times of...Grand Central Station **...ALL ABOARD!**

A little bull goes a long way

Adventures on Susane's Flyer O Gauge layout
- as reported by Paul Wells

One day we decided to clean out the garage so we could have more room for **Susane's** Prewar Flyer layout, and give me some room to work on other layouts. Well, to make a long story short, we moved her layout to the middle of the garage. I had finished putting the track back on the new carpet. She was adding scenery, buildings, animals and people to the layout when a bull got loose and started wreaking havoc to the hobos' building. All we could think of was that he didn't like where Susane had put him in the first place. Anyway, we roped him and had a BBQ the next day. Now that that problem was solved, you can see the hobos are back and eating around a campfire.



Bull rush! Not everything is OK at the OK Corral.



Around the campfire: all's well that [burp] ends well.

Membership News

By Tim Taormina, membership chair

LAST CALL FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL! If you haven't already done so, please send your 2012 membership renewal payment (\$20.00-single, \$25.00-family) to me at 5509 DanJac Circle, Sacramento, CA 95822 before the April meeting or plan to pay at the meeting. A \$5.00 late fee will apply to memberships renewed after the April meeting! Members paying by mail may pick up their new cards at the April meeting. If you know of anyone who is interested in joining TTOS, please have them contact me. Now is the time to join to get full value for your membership dues!

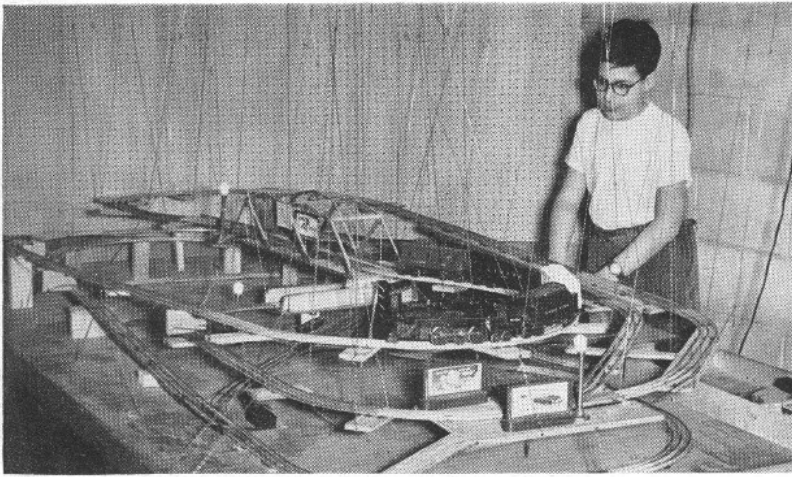
New members joining us since our last issue include **Phil Graham** and **Mike Simmons**! We also want to welcome back **Don Rosa** who just missed us too much to stay away!! Our club now numbers 116 members!

Members "keep 'em rolling" at our monthly meets



At the February 4th meeting, members (top to bottom) **Bill Bender**, **Dave Thomsen** and **Geary Musselman** brought their portable operating layouts and ran them. These delightful layouts undergo changes in equipment and accessories often, so it's always worth taking a close look.

Thanks Bill, Dave and Geary for making our meetings even more fun.



Train highballs through the maze of wires as it moves from one of the three track levels to another

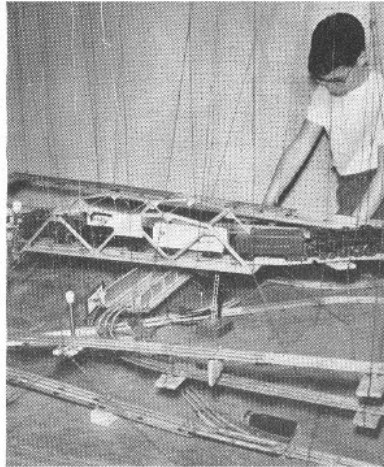
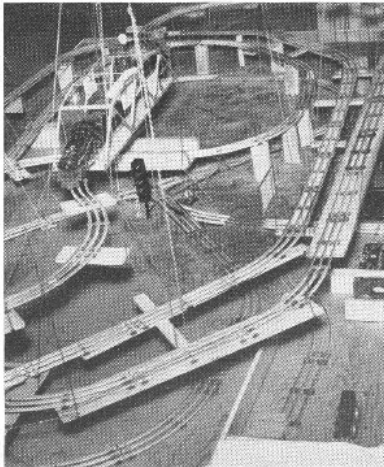
Train Rolls Through Maze of Wires on Suspended Track

SOMETHING DIFFERENT—that was the goal of Philip Karr and his son David, of Milwaukee, Wis., when they decided to build a model-railroad layout. They achieved it by suspending the rails from the ceiling joists on wires. Now they have a multilevel layout that can easily be

changed by lengthening or shortening the wires. Chains anchored to a table under the layout prevent any side sway of the tracks. The layout contains 84 feet of track, supported by plywood strips at the joints. From a distance the track appears to be floating in mid-air.

All the joints of the track are supported with strips of plywood. Chains anchored to table prevent sway

Wires fastened to the overhead joists support the track sections. Layout contains 84 feet of track



California Geography Smarty-Quiz

There are several incorporated cities in California whose names are the same as an adjacent city but with a compass point added (for example, Covina and West Covina). However, there are three pairs where the two cities are in different counties.

Can you name them?

There are three incorporated cities in California that have a compass point as part of their name, but there is no such incorporated city without the compass point. (for example, if there was a West Covina but no Covina).

Can you name them? (cities where the compass point is part of the word - like Westminster - don't count)

(answers next page)

Meeting Notes

by Phil Fravesi, SVD Secretary

December 3, 2011

The meeting was called to order by President **John DeHaan**.

Guests: **Phil Graham**

New members: **Mike Simmons**

Certificates of appreciation were given for work on the layout.

Jerry Azzaro was recognized for the great work he has done on the Side Track newsletter.

There was a discussion around moving the October meet to the Holiday Inn, Elk Grove. the current site at Scottish Rite is becoming too expensive. The Holiday Inn would be approximately half the cost but we would have to rent tables and chairs. We will have to check with the Fire Marshal regarding the spacing of tables and aisles to determine how many vendor tables we can accommodate. If the club does decide to relocate, we would have to start early with advertising the new location.

2013 National convention to be held in Reno/Sparks area.

January, 2012: There was no meeting

February 4, 2012

The meeting was called to order by President **John Dehaan**.

Guests: **Robert Montiero, Philip Montiero, Joseph and Cheryl Lawson**

National Board eliminated the position of National Director on December 26 with no explanation at that time. There is now part-time help in the office 3 days a week to process dues and mail membership cards along with other duties.

Golden Gate Division is looking for help with the 2012 National Convention including organizational help.

There was a question regarding insurance rider from National. It appears they are in place at this time. Possible future sites for Division visits were discussed at follows:

Grass Valley/Nevada City has a narrow gauge RR and other RR and mining museums; The steam museum in Willits; The Western RR Museum (trolley) in Rio Vista.

A motion was made to print business size cards advertising the Sacramento Valley Division for member to hand out to interested parties. Good idea, it will be looked in to further.

Jeff Silvera announced the food and toy drive was a big success.

Due to a conflict with Cal-Stewart on March 3 and the Holiday Inn not being available the next Saturday, there will be no meeting in March.

Thanks, SVD Volunteers!

Certificates of appreciation were presented to members by president John DeHaan at the December meeting:



Steve Hamer and **Richard Zanotti** brought interesting items for the December Show and Tell.



... and at the February meeting:



December Food Bank Donations

(at right) SVD members brought donations for the Sacramento Food Bank. **Jeff Silvera** delivered them and brought back a nice letter of appreciation.



Smarty-Quiz Answers

West Sacramento, South San Francisco, and East Palo Alto are not in the same counties as their namesakes.
South Lake Tahoe, West Hollywood and West Gate have no namesakes (there are no incorporated cities called Lake Tahoe, Hollywood or Gate).



Curt Darling (center rear) posed with a group of members who have worked on the club's modular layout.

Down the track

Upcoming events of interest to SVD members (SVD events are in **BOLD**)

March 2-4: Cal-Stewart Meet, Santa Clara

March 3: NO SVD Meet

April 7: SVD Meet* - Holiday Inn, Elk Grove

May 5: SVD Meet* - Holiday Inn, Elk Grove

May 26: TCA Train Show—Scottish Rite Center, Sacramento

*Meetings begin at 9:30 AM

TTOS Vision Statement:

The future of the Toy Train Operating Society is predicated on one simple fact. We must attract new membership. The TTOS National Club will focus on developing, in conjunction with the divisions, viable recruitment and retention plans and provide support both at the divisional level and the national level towards these goals. Potential new members are typically attracted to our hobby by experiencing our toy trains in full operation and witnessing the camaraderie that comes from sharing our passion and hobby with others, not unlike the original direction our founding members envisioned. This will be our primary focus.

Membership First – both new and old is our goal. Happy members are proud members and typically these members want to share their experience with just about anyone who will listen. Everyone likes being a part of a successful organization. TTOS National will plan and design all efforts with this in mind.