



THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division

FALL

2013

Come for the trains. Stay for the people.

Jerry Azzaro, editor

President's Message

by Jack Hornor, SVD President

Hello everyone. We had a great convention with TTOS and LOTS in Reno NV. The outings were great especially the exclusive Virginia and Truckee steam excursion from Virginia City to the Carson River including 6 miles of new track that is not open to the public and back to Virginia City. There were two runby's for us photographers with lots of smoke for great pictures. The docents talked about the history of the train, the mining history, the area history, and what is currently going on with the V & T in the area. He even gently gave a plug for the local cathouses.

In the National Board of Directors meeting we all learned, with handouts, the current fiscal and member status for TTOS National. For the year 2012 we are in the black with \$45,000 cash in the bank and a net worth of \$108,000 at the end of 2012. From January to June 30, 2013 we have added another \$23,000 to the bank. As for the Reno convention there were no room, meal, or other commitments and it was estimated that if 100 people registered we would come out ahead about \$4,000, if 150 registered we would come out ahead about \$6,500. However the total registration was 375 but our best guess is that more than 150 of those are TTOS. TTOS will come out of this convention in the black.

All future conventions will be in family oriented locations like Los Angeles, CA, with places like Disneyland, Universal Studios, Hollywood, Catalina and many other family oriented activities. Our next year's convention will be in the Los Angeles Area at a location that has already promised TTOS a good price and a no commitment deal. All future conventions will be no commitment deals or we will go with hotels that will deal with us in this manner.

On a sad note our current National president, **Don Kyle**, resigned by phone during the board meeting and **Rick Plummer**, our vice president, has taken over for the remainder of this term.

The nominees for the next term are:

President:

Randy Giroux, Southern Pacific Division
Walter Olsen, Southwestern Division
Rick Plummer, Central California Division

Vice President:

Tony Tesoriere, Central California Division
Tom Gibson, Sacramento Valley Division
Bill Arndt, Nevada Division

Secretary:

Tami Jo Nix, Central California Division
Phil Fravesi, Sacramento Valley Division

Treasurer:

Jim Silvius, Southern Pacific Division

Member at Large:

Ron DeSimone, Southern Pacific Division

Please vote, but choose carefully as we would all like to see TTOS National survive and in the black. If you do not know some of the candidates and would like to know more before you vote, please see me at our next meeting.

We have some busy times ahead of us with our Scottish Rite River City show in October and the California State Railroad Museum in November. These are the shows that showcase our club and let the public know we exist, I therefore am asking each and every one of our members to help out whenever and wherever you can. I wish to thank **Carl Madsen** and **Rick Rose** and the other members who volunteered to haul, set up, operate and repack the layout after each show. This activity should be fun and is very beneficial to the Division. Thank you.

As of this moment there are some club outings in the planning stages, however dates and details are not yet known. There is no outing after the September meet but the River City meet replaces the October meeting and there is an outing in November.

As always the Board of Directors and I are open at any time to discuss future ideas, suggestions or complaints on any issue that you may have. Please feel free to see the Board or myself at anytime. Thank you again for your support.

Club Layout News

by Rick Rose, SVD Layout Coordinator

Are you interested in the club's modular layout? We need volunteers to help set up and tear down the layout. We also need people to maintain it (clean track, etc.) and also to add scenic items (buildings, telephone poles), skirting on edge, and to run trains through the day or days of various meets.

If you have any interest in any aspect of the layout please contact me at any meeting, or through the phone or e-mail contact as listed in your SVD membership directory.

Most of the meets would include free entry to the meet or show for volunteers. We would like to keep the time you have to work at a minimum, so the more people we have the less work we all have to do.

We realize no one can be there every time, but with enough people we can get things done!

Treasurer's Report

by Beverly Sigafoos, SVD Treasurer

Due to changes in personnel, this financial report only covers June 1, 2013, through July 31, 2013. There were two withdrawals and one deposit as follows:

\$20.00 App fee	deposit
\$45.64 Side Track expenses	withdrawal
\$13.02 Flyers	withdrawal
Checkbook	\$796.03
Business Investment	\$12,245.15
Fixed Term CD	\$34,006.34
Bank Totals	\$47,047.52

Membership News

By Tim Taormina, SVD Membership Chair

We currently have 104 members. I would remind you to please stay current with your national dues since it is a requirement for membership in our division and we are dependent upon them for our liability insurance.

TTOS layout at TCA Scottish Rite show

Photos by John DeHaan



Our club's layout was up and operating at the TCA train show at Scottish Rite Center on May 25th.

Many SVD members helped out with the show, and TCA members have offered their help with our River City Meet at the same location in the Fall.



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.

Meeting Notes

by Beverly Sigafos, SVD Secretary

TTOS - SVD Meeting Minutes June 1, 2013

President **Jack Hornor** called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. No guests or new members.

Old Business:

The TCA River City Meet ran very smoothly and was well attended. Our layout looked good and ran very well. The TTOS/LOTS Convention is in July in Reno NV, with super outings and tours planned.

The outing at **John DeHaan's** home in Vallejo on August 4, 2013, will be catered and John requests an RSVP. We will be able to see not only John's trains, but also his collection of vintage cars and motorcycles.

The bylaws are still being revised to change the discriminatory portions of the old bylaws and to streamline and/or eliminate items that have caused discontent to members in the past.

New Business:

Karl Schmidt's wife Jeanette fell and fractured her shoulder and her hip. We wish her a speedy recovery.

Phyllis Chiaino, our treasurer, is retiring because of serious family issues. We thank her for her service and hope for speedy resolution for her family problems.

Beverly Sigafos has taken over her duties until a new treasurer can be found.

Show and Tell: **Steve Gower** gave historical info about trains. **John Liens** showed Marx caboose and a Cities Service Tank Car.

Drawing: Won by **Tom Gibson**

Adjournment: 10:00 a.m.

TTOS – SVD Meeting Minutes July 6, 2013

President **Jack Hornor** called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. No guests or new members.

Old Business:

Beverly Sigafos has agreed to fill the position of treasurer and has been put on the bank account.

Please RSVP for **John DeHaan's** outing on August 4, 2013. Also, let him know what dish you plan to bring to share.

We are still working on additional outings which may include Western Railroad museum Rio Vista Trolleys, and Tilden Park in Oakland among others.

The bylaws have been tabled because of other urgent issues.

New Business:

Curt Darling has resigned as layout chairperson after several years of service in this capacity. He will be sorely missed. He was presented with a certificate of appreciation.

As many of our members are getting older and unable to do the heavy work setting up and taking down the layout, we need volunteers to step up to keep it in operation. Until this happens, the layout will be retired and has been secured in a new storage location free of charge, saving the Club \$900 per year.

The layout belongs to each and every one of us. Please think about this situation and we will have a discussion at the General Meeting on August 3, 2013.

Show and Tell: **Lisa Stanton, John Liens** and **Pete White** presented wind up and clockwork trains and other very interesting items.

Drawing: won by **Eli Amaral**

Adjournment: 10:05 a.m.

TTOS – SVD General Meeting – August 3, 2013

President **Jack Hornor** called the meeting to order at 9:30 Welcome and Good Morning! No guests or new members.

Old Business:

National TTOS/LOTS Convention was a great success because of several factors:

It was held where there were many activities of interest for families as well as train buffs. There was no minimum for food and beverage. No commitment required for room nights. No credit card or conference calls. Future conventions will be conducted in a similar manner.

National President Don Kyle resigned during the convention because of pressing personal matters. **Vice President Rick Plummer** agreed to serve out Don's term as president.

Our River City at the Scottish Rite Temple will be held on October 5, 2013. If you know of any potential vendors, please let us know. We need volunteers to help out at the meet. If you are willing to help, please let Beverly know.

New Business:

We need a layout crew to set up and take down the Club Layout and a truck and driver to transport the layout to our events. A motion was made and seconded to have **Carl Madsen** haul the layout to our next two events this year. Motion carried. **Rick Rose** volunteered to head up a Layout Committee and about a dozen people signed up to be on the committee. We will still need more people to volunteer for this, if we are to be successful.

We will discuss more outings at our next meeting, September 7, 2013.

Show and Tell: **Phil Fravesi** shared some photos he brought from his recent trip to St. Louis, MO, where he visited the Museum of Transportation.

Bill Bender retrofitted a church kit to look like the elementary school where he attended school in Michigan.

Door Prize Drawing won by **Chuck Stone**.

Meeting adjourned: 10:30 a.m.

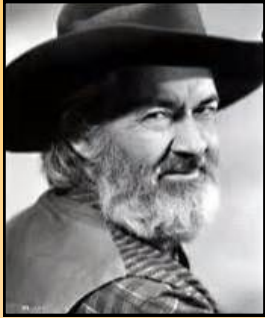
All minutes respectfully submitted by Beverly Sigafos, Secretary

BOXCAR JACK'S WEB PICKS

by Jack Ahearn

Jack takes us into the little-known world of railway maintenance machines

MOWs that only a mother could love

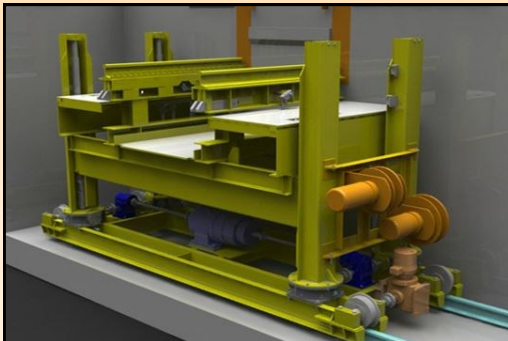


MOWs: AKA Maintenance of Way rail cars and equipment used on virtually every American railroad. These cars are historically fascinating, from the earliest days right up to the present time. They have emerged and adapted to and met every challenge railroads confronted!

Perhaps in a future issue of the SIDE TRACK we can bring to you the colorful and pioneering images of the quaint ancestors of today's extreme machines which you'll see within the next several pages. Unlike their simpler predecessors of yesteryear, today's mechanically innovative and technological wonders are what could be called 'Mainline Monsters'! In the likely words of one of our childhood western movie favorites; *"Them thar blankety blank creatures are sum of the darndest, rootentoontenest wild buncha mean looken monstrosities I'd ever did seen!"*

Let's take a peek into the S. P. Sacramento rail yards. The Boiler Shop is a part of the yards. In it are many locos, rail cars and machines. A most impressive piece of machinery is the Drop Table. This monster enables changing locomotive trucks (as on a diesel) by releasing the securing pins and lowering the freed trucks. The rest of the locomotive remains in place. The Drop Table isn't actually a MOW car, but so massive, it's included here because, like the following oddities; only a mother could love it!

Whiting drop table



Whiting Drop Table. Whiting Corp. photo



S.P. # 6051 on drop table in the Boiler shop of the S.P. yards.
-Foto by Fravesi.

A drop table or wheel drop is a device used in railway engineering during maintenance jobs that require the removal of locomotive wheels. The machine is built in a drop pit allowing a locomotive or rolling stock to be rolled onto it, avoiding the need for heavy cranes or jacks to lift the vehicle off the rails.

The vehicle is placed over the drop table, and the connections attaching the wheelset to the vehicle are unfastened. This allows the wheel set to "float" independently of the locomotive. The wheelset is lowered into the drop pit on a short section of rail, and a dummy rail, normally a part of the drop table machinery, is then inserted in the gap over the lowered wheelset. This enables the vehicle to be moved clear of the drop table on its remaining wheels, so that the removed wheelset can then be lifted out of the drop pit for maintenance work to be performed on it.

Personally, I like **Phil Fravesi's** brief and visually simple statement: "Don't raise the bridge...lower the water!" What's that got to do with changing out the trucks of a locomotive? Let's watch [this video presentation](#) of the table in action.

Continued next page

Loram ballast cleaner

A firm foundation is paramount to proper track performance and proper drainage is key to maintaining that foundation. Trapped water in the ballast decreases the necessary interlocking mechanics, which causes a loss of ballast and subgrade strength. This loss of strength deteriorates track geometry, creates batter, and loosens fasteners. Excess water also leads to premature tie deterioration and leaves the track vulnerable to frost heaves in cold weather. Shoulder ballast cleaning breaks open mud pockets and releases trapped water to restore drainage. It extends tonnage between surfacing and undercutting cycles, extends ballast and tie life and reduces the occurrences of frost heaves.

[This YouTube video](#) shows the ballast cleaner in action



Track ballast cleaner in action. Loram MOW photo

Loram rail grinder

Rail is the most valuable asset for a railroad. The wheel/rail interface of a railroad is a much talked about subject because of the cost involved in premature rail change outs. Typical problems encountered on all railroads include shelling, spalling, side wear, plastic flow, dipped welds, and corrugation and fatigue. Rail grinding is considered the most effective maintenance practice to control the effects of rolling contact fatigue, to restore profile, and to maximize value from the rail asset.

[This YouTube video](#) shows the rail grinder in action, including a fire accidentally started during the grinding.



Grinding and sparking on the iron! Loram MOW photo

Fairmont/HARSCO railway tamper

Railroad tampers are another type of maintenance equipment that has greatly improved the efficiency and speed in maintaining the track and right-of-way. As their name implies railroad tampers use hydraulic jacks to "tamp" the ballast, which levels the stone around the ties as well as works it underneath the ties for proper support. As with virtually all maintenance equipment before these machines were constructed all such work was done by manual track gangs that required a strong back and powerful arms. The newest tampers come equipped with a bevy of electronics to also properly align the track after tamping and what are known as production tampers have the capability of lifting the rails to insure that the ballast is beneath the ties for maximum support.

Here is a [YouTube video](#) of a modern Fairmont Tamper in action



Mark IV Tamper - HARSCO Rail photo

Bonus: Here's a [YouTube video](#) of a Fairmont Mark I Torsion Beam Tamper in operation at Western Railway Museum, taken and posted by editor Jerry Azzaro.

Continued next page

Herzog CarTopper™ Material Handler

Over the top rail car operations.

Click on the image at right to see a video of the CarTopper in operation:

(Note; while watching the video...which is moving; Cat or car?)

Video by Herzog Railroad Services, Inc.

The CarTopper™ rides along the top of railcars moving from car to car, unloading onto the right of way, as the work train moves along the track. Once the car is unloaded the operator simply moves the CarTopper™ to the next car, regardless of variance in car heights. The success of the Herzog CarTopper™ lead to other uses in railroad construction and maintenance. Equipped with electro magnets the CarTopper's™ versatility to load and unload rail, plates, spikes and anchors eliminates switching delays.

This [YouTube video](#) shows the unit unloading itself after unloading the cars.



CAT climbing onto a rail car

Watch this Caterpillar #319D take a hop, skip and jump to unload a hopper! (Perhaps someone should tell them about the doors under the car.)

This [YouTube video](#) shows the CAT in action. Not having hydraulics at both ends like the CarTopper, it needs some stepstools.

In case you're interested in owning one of the gems:

2009 Caterpillar 319D LN For Sale by Wyoming Machinery.

Now Only: \$187,000.00 (stepstools not included).

Click for more details: [Caterpillar 319D LN For Sale](#)
(may have been snapped up by the time you read this)



Union Pacific rotary snow plows

YouTube videos:

[Union Pacific 900081 at Cheyenne](#). Another one of UP's homebuilt plows, this one was built in 1966 and was powered by a 3000 hp diesel. It was built using components from a variety of sources; the cab side window appears to be from an Alco PA. The plow was retired in 1994 and is now at the Museum of Transport, St. Louis.

[Union Pacific 900082 at Cheyenne](#). This was the last rotary built by UP, being completed in 1971. It is similar in design to #900081; it is powered by a 2500 hp diesel. This plow was used as recently as October 1997.



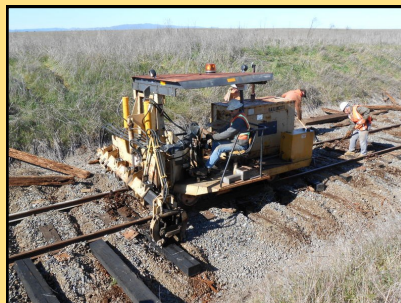
Photo by Phil Fravesi

More ugly ducklings (courtesy of Western Railway Museum)

Joint bar straightener



Tie inserter



Tie crane



Continued next page

Train laying its own track?



Photo: L. A. Chen Taiji Center



Above two photos; KUHF-FM, Houston, TX

Oops, one of these is the wrong picture!...ahh, these last two are better.

This frequently-viewed [YouTube video](#) is labeled “A train laying its own track”, but it appears to be replacing ties on existing track. Whatever it’s doing, it’s fascinating to watch and certainly takes the cake for “MOWs That only a mother could love”.

Sorry (but not surprised) to report that there are no descriptive stories, nor will I attempt to write one, about this rather intricate curiosa.



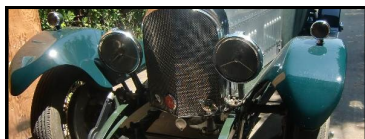
However, perhaps the following will give you an idea of ...

... how NOT to do it!

Contrary to the other machines we’ve seen, this Nazi invention from 1945 wasn't as constructive. I mean, Nazis weren't constructive at all, but this train of theirs was designed to destroy railroads as it ran over them. Click on the image at right to see the video.



Birthday celebration!



On August 4 many SVD members joined **John DeHaan** at his home in Vallejo to help him celebrate his 65th birthday. The food, drinks and fun were great .. not to mention John's great collection of rare and antique cars.

MEMBER PHOTOS

Phil Fravesi sent these great photos and comments. The first group is from the [St. Louis Museum of Transportation](#) which Phil visited while attending the TCA 2013 convention, followed by an interesting layout on display at the convention. On the last page are some shots Phil took while attending the Reno TTOS-LOTS convention.



This is an electric powered locomotive and cars along with an electric front loader for work in the mines.



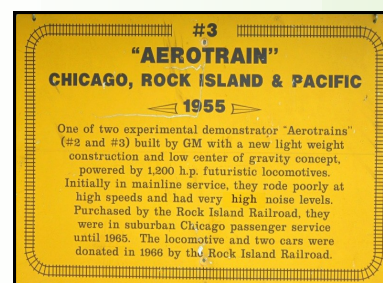
Army switcher. Powered by two gas powered jet turbine engines. Except for the number, it looks like the Army copied Lionel's #41 to a tee.



Illinois Central. A copy of the AF Presidents Special?



Rock Island AEROTRAIN. One of two built. You won't see this at just any museum. In the world of collectors, I think this qualifies as "rare".



This tells the AEROTRAIN story



Milwaukee Bi-Polar Loco. The term bi-polar refers to the type of traction motors used. These had two poles that were part of the motor frame which reduced the size of the motor to allow it to fit within the power truck.



Burlington shovel nose streamliner



Union Pacific snow blower



The business end of UP's blower



NYC took a page out of the Lionel catalog with their version of the Standard Ga #402

MEMBER PHOTOS continued ...



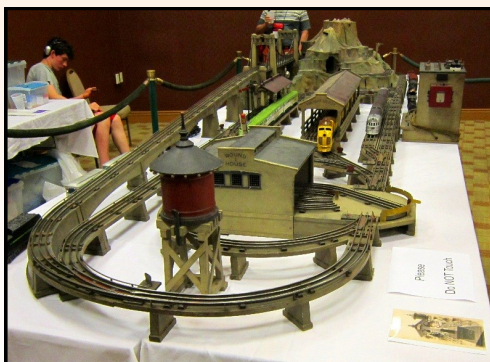
This is one of the first electric powered “mules” used at the Panama Canal. The large turret in the center is a horizontal winch used to position the ship within the canal and to tow.



Italian built electric for mountain service. Powered by two 1000 hp. motors, it operated on 3000 volt, 3 phase power - hence, it required two overhead wires. Top speed, 31 mph.

Phil found this interesting item at the TCA convention: a modular American Flyer store display in near perfect condition. Note the 4th rail that was added onto the 3 rail O gauge track, only on the main track.

Editor's note: I like the turntable which also serves as part of the mainline.



ATTIC FIND of the YEAR

1921 Train Store Display

St. Louis Christmas Department Store

Featuring

- FOUND in a St. Louis Home Attic
- Stored in Attic since 1925
- 100% Original and Untouched
- O Gauge Track with 4th Rail Added
- Professional Built
- 10 Piece Modular Sections
- Highly Detailed
- Over 15 foot long and 4 foot wide

Ken Hake



More Phil photos next page



... and from Reno and Carson City:

Phil writes: *"The LOTS and TTOS members were picked up at the hotels and made the short but grueling grind up the mountain to Virginia City. This trip was exclusively for the train club members and the train consisted of three passenger cars and a steam locomotive, #18. The train and crew were ready when we arrived and after a chance to view some of the shops and equipment, we boarded for the trip down the mountain to Carson City. The loco coasted nearly all the way with only two small inclines to climb. They are adding to the track as time and funds allow. We traveled past their new depot about two miles where the loco uncoupled and ran by to the head end. The tracks do not go into Carson City and never will as the land is too valuable. On the return, we were dropped off at the new depot for a run by and taking on water in the tender. The run by was on nearly level ground and the loco did not have to work hard, hence, smoke and sounds were not heart stopping. We boarded the train and once again headed up the grade toward Virginia City. About 2/3 of the way, we stopped and disembarked, climbed up an embankment and watched as the engineer backed about two miles down the grade, around a curve and out of site. He had promised lots of smoke and was true to his word. He opened the throttle and laid on the whistle. Number 18 belched smoke and as it neared, you could feel the ground shake under your feet. Definitely heart pounding! The train did come back to pick us up and we continued on to Virginia City. Along the way, we saw two herds of wild mustangs and a Deere farm. Yes, out in the absolute middle of nowhere, someone has a piece of property with too many John Deere tractors to count (collectors can be strange people). Upon returning to Virginia City, we were on our own for lunch and time to wander through town before boarding the buses back to Reno. Just an added note, the crew was very accommodating and showed us a great time."* Here's a [YouTube video](#) about Number 18.



The engineer backed down the track out of sight and opened up the throttle. It was a thrill as it was approaching and when it thundered past, the ground shook. Of course, the engineer was laying on the whistle. It doesn't get much better than that.



Number 18 performing a run-by on level ground in front of the Carson City Terminal.



Emma taking time out from the National TTOS Convention for a little used car shopping at the National Auto Museum, Reno. This car belonged to Lana Turner.

View from the coach platform. The locomotive pulled (coasted most of the way) down from Virginia City to the end of the line near Carson City. The loco switched to the head-end and pulled us back under a full head of steam.



Show and Tell

Jeff Silvera, S&T Chairman

At our June 1 meeting, member **John Leins** brought in some nice Marx cars that he had picked up at the May 25th TCA meet. These were nice Marline Scale Rail railroad cars. In 1952, Marx started making scale trains in plastic in four- and eight-wheel versions. From freight cars to diesel locomotives, plastic soon replaced tin. Some bore the road name of a particular train line, but others featured a Marx line called Marlines. John also picked up some of the new Marx made by James and Debby Flynn. Very Nice!

Steve Gower told us about Joseph James Jordan, born June 5, 1888, a great railroad man that he had discovered on a headstone in a cemetery where he was visiting. Steve brought in the book he found which included the man's story.

At our July 6th meeting member **Lisa Stanton** brought in quite a collection of her clockwork tinplate trains from yesteryear. She had a nice Hornby set which was manufactured and distributed by Meccano from between 1920 to 1930. Also a very nice set of Bing trains from before the war and in its set box. Lisa had a set of JEP trains, a French manufacturer. She believes her set with its box was from the early 1950's. Also a Train Eclair C.R. Set was made by Issamayer trains Germany 1910 to 1915. Thanks for bringing your awesome sets, Lisa!

Pete White brought in a old Joyline set from the 1930's. I believe he had bought it from members **Chuck Brasher** and **Clyde Easterly**. He had also brought a Nifty Trolley that was made in Germany.

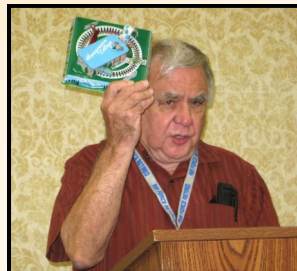
John Leins showed his Honeymoon Cottage that was made by Marx. It was a little wind-up toy with a train going around on it. This item was purchased in the Cordelia Junction antique rail car store near the I-80/680 interchange.

Dave Thomsen brought in a diorama of a Plasticville mobile home park, as well as his portable layout with a great Mobilgas station. (Special thanks to **Jim Groth** for the July 6th photos.)

For our August 3rd meeting **Phil Fravesi** brought some pictures of a 1:1 army switcher that he saw at the TCA convention in St. Louis this summer.

Also, **Bill Bender** showed a Plasticville building that he had "kitbashed" to represent the schoolhouse that he attended when he was a kid 1948-54. Very Nice Bill, good job.

That's all for now - thank you everyone for your items you shared. If you have suggestions for future show-and-tell themes, please contact me.



Down the track

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

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

September 20-22: [Redwood Empire Train Show](#) - Santa Rosa

October 5: River City Toy Train Meet - Scottish Rite Center

(contact **Jeff Silvera** for information or to volunteer)

November 2: SVD Meet - Holiday Inn Express, Elk Grove* **

November 22-24: Cal-Stewart Meet, Ontario CA

November 23-24: [Great Train Expo](#), Pleasanton

November 29-30 (Thanksgiving weekend): SVD layout at CSRM

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

December 7-8: [SJVTTO Show](#) - County Fairgrounds, Turlock

***Meetings begin at 9:30 AM. BRING YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD**

**** followed by a home layout visit**