



THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division

Fall

2020

The future is already here — it's just not very evenly distributed. - William Gibson

Jerry Azzaro, editor

President's Message

by John DeHaan, SVD President



Hi Everyone!

I hope this finds you safe and well. Looks like life is sorting itself to our new normal (after 8 months of complete disruption)

and it's time to get TTOS-SVD back on track after our successful River City Meet. As you know, our president, **Mike Schafer**, resigned in August due to health concerns. That meant I had to take the presidency to fill out the last four months of his term and precious little time to accomplish a lot! **Carl and Laurie Madsen** were kind enough to offer their beautiful backyard for socially distant and safe outdoor meetings in August, September, and October. Now we have to find an indoor venue for the coming cold (and wet – we hope) months. I asked club members at the September meeting to search their local areas but no one has had any success. Now that health restrictions are being lifted in more communities each week, we need to keep looking! The Holiday Inn Express in Rancho Cordova that Mike located (we used it in March) turned out NOT to be suitable as its access was seriously deficient. Because our members range mostly from Lodi to Grass Valley and Vallejo to the foothills, we need to find something in the Sacramento metro area.

We must hold an election for all SVD officers NOW as our terms expire in December. We need to have fresh ideas and energy to get our Division rolling again. The obligations are for the most part pretty light and don't require a lot of time each month. We need a treasurer, secretary, VP and president to get a Board that meets the requirements of National (our lack of a Secretary was a big concern of National this past year).

We need new ideas for getting the FUN back into our meetings to keep members coming back and attracting new ones. **Ed Strisar** has volunteered to create a new position of Events Co-ordinator. He already has ideas for local tours, guest speakers, getting show & tell back, and the like.

We need to recruit new members! Our club lost three long-term members this year: **Clyde Easterly, Lynn Cochran**, and, very recently, **Spencer Freund**. Their friendship, knowledge, and participation will be greatly missed. With the resignation of Seth Parry (moved to Nevada to take a new job), we have lost the leadership of the Layout Team.

At this time, we have no plans for a holiday celebration. We need to have something even to support the toy drive and food drive donations. I am open to any and all suggestions.

Well, enough. See you soon. Keep in touch, keep safe and keep healthy. All my best wishes...

John DeHaan, President TTOS-SVD



September 5th membership meeting at Carl Madsen's home in Elk Grove

Photos by **John DeHaan**



SVD club members enjoying the fresh air and camaraderie



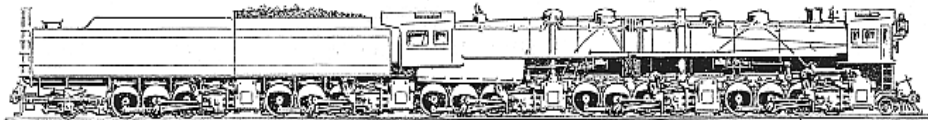
Above: Outbuilding housing Carl's train room. Apparently Lionel copied his design for their #132 station.



Lionel's model of Carl's building is remarkably accurate.



Here's what Lionel failed to include: a beautiful, palm-shaded reflecting pool!



Trains Stolen from CTTOM Display

At Christmastime, Buck Kamphausen (a highly respected businessman and property owner in Vallejo) asked the Carquinez Toy Train Operating Museum (CTTOM) to put together a display of toy trains as a window display in a historic department store on Georgia St in downtown Vallejo. We had three large tables lined with colorful standard gauge trains and a display cabinet of Lionel O-gauge. The standard gauge trains were mostly like new Lionel "Classics" and McCoy "special editions" from TCA and TTOS events, (many from the Jim McCarthy collection), plus a few vintage Flyer pieces. Sometime in March, someone broke into the building and STOLE every one of the trains AND their boxes. The building was not alarmed and no one knew until a club member passed by the building and saw all the trains were missing. The guy apparently came back and was stealing furniture from the back of the building when police arrested him. They did not report recovering any trains. He was released on his own recognizance and failed to appear at any of

his subsequent hearings. Neither the building owner nor his staff NOR the police ever contacted CTTOM. There was no insurance on the building contents because it was under repair from the 2014 Napa earthquake.

The police have refused to release the case files or names to anyone. CTTOM did not have an inventory or any useful photos of the display to build one. We estimated the value of the trains lost at about \$4,000.

The pandemic shutdown of train shows may have cut off his means of disposal. If you see any number of "like new" Lionel "Classic" or McCoy standard gauge freight cars offered for sale online or at shows, please get a name or phone number of the seller. Maybe together, our posse can find this mutt. It's clear neither the Vallejo PD or Mr. Kamphausen are going to help.

We in TTOS need to learn from this sad experience when we are asked to put our trains on display.

A Nice Bequest from Clyde Easterly

by John DeHaan

Shortly after Clyde passed away, I got a phone call from **Chuck Brasher** to ask if I was coming up to Grass Valley any time soon. He said he had something for me from Clyde's vast collection that Clyde wanted me to have. It turned out to be a framed proof of the box for the Lionel "Ward Kimball" box car (6-58235) issued for the 2005 TTOS-SWD Cal-Stewart Meet. (See photo 1). But wait, there was more! Included was the artist's prototype of the car itself with hand-painted art affixed and Ward Kimball's autographs and a prototype of the proposed S-gauge car (which was never manufactured). (See photo 2). Chuck offered me a mint example of the O-gauge car as released, to complete the set. I'll try to bring them all to a SVD Show & Tell at some future date (??). I will treasure the set in fond memories of Clyde's friendship and guidance since I first met him in 1995.



River City Show a Success!

By John DeHaan

I'm glad to report that The River City meet was carried out as planned on 26 September in very large part due to **Bryan Stanton** stepping forward on the 7th to negotiate a deal with Scottish Rite that allowed us to host a shortened but happy day for all involved. Bryan designed a great table layout to include about 90 vendor tables plus tables for **Mike Marple**, the parts guy. This layout had to meet the 6' social distancing rules with wide aisles and "double" vendor rows. Everyone wore masks (and we had folks circulating all day to make sure they stayed in place. We provided masks when needed, disposable gloves, and sanitizer. Vendors offered a wide selection of goods – old and new, in all gauges. We welcomed over 150 guests, including children. This was the first meet in Northern California since March, so vendors and buyers were really elated to be at a train show at last! We were able to offer only coffee, soft drinks, pastries, and snacks (providing open food service really complicates COVID-19 requirements). A number of people said they missed the operating layouts (particularly our club's) but **Bob Remley** (all the way from San Jose) was again a hit with his all-singing, all-dancing operating accessory extravaganza.

Sadly, we only had handful of kids all day, so we only awarded one of the great boxed sets on offer for their drawing. Sets were donated by Chuck Brasher and Carl Madsen. Our winner, young **Will Smith** of Napa, age 7, was offered his choice of sets –

a G-gauge, remote control set or a Lionel O-gauge freight set. He announced his choice of the G-gauge set with a loud "YESSS!!". The set was battery powered so he could set it up inside or outside.

Shopping dropped off after 1:30 so we started shut-down about 2PM (a popular decision). The Scottish Rite manager was there the whole day to make sure we followed all the guidelines and she was very happy with the result. The bad news was that at the end, while we were packing up, she advised me that the SR board had

decided to pass along the costs of decontaminating the facility and the tables and chairs used. She had estimated the cost to be about \$400. The invoice that just came was for \$550 (which we had not included in our financial planning). That just about killed our profit but we gained so much in producing fun and interaction that had been so missed in the COVID year of 2020.

This was a success for SVD and I want to thank the members who had tables, but especially those who helped make it possible: **Barbara Rohrs** (registrar), **Spencer Boles** and **David Burke** (security),

Admissions: **George Loughner**, **Jack Ahearn**, **Suzie Brasher**, and **David Sandfort**; Set-up: **Jeff Silvera**; Clean-up: **Rose Craighead**, **David Sandfort** and **Phil Fravesi**; and most of all - **Bryan Stanton** as Co-Chair for planning and execution of a meet that was cancelled and brought back to life! Thanks to all!

John DeHaan, Meet Co-chair



Prize winner **Will Smith** with his "loot"

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Around the Scottish Rite hall

Photos by Lisa Stanton and John DeHaan



Pre-Pandemic Leftovers

Things were normal before the stuff hit the fan

January meeting photos
by **Rich Kotowski**



Uh-Oh

January Show and Tell - photos and text by **John DeHaan**



New member **George Arrant** with his like-new AF freight set, ca. 1938



Mike Schafer with a custom-built Milwaukee Road diesel (SD90??)



John DeHaan's Budweiser box car with overprint covering the BEER label, with Standard gauge trucks (not 1 ga.) Imported during the tragic experiment of Prohibition, 1920.

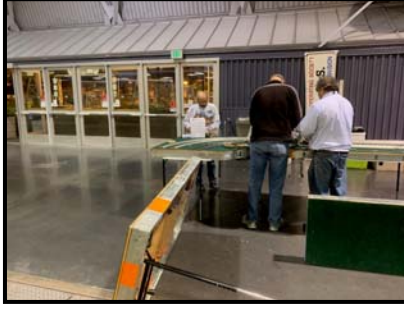
The February Show and Tell featured two members. **Bryan Stanton** presented a very rare 1905, Lionel 2 ½ gauge operational electric trolley in outstanding condition that still has a great paint condition. **Mike Schafer** presented a 1954 Lionel #2037 steam engine that was his first Lionel train. The engine sold for \$19.95 in 1954 and included four freight cars. The item still runs flawlessly. He also showed what he had used for weight in the tender in 1954, that included two rare bottle openers and like items used in lieu of lead weight not available in that era. No photos were available of the presentation.

**“Leftovers”
continued next page**



The SVD club layout appeared at the January 5th Cal Expo train show

Photos by **Mike Schafer** and **John DeHaan**



A nearby Flyer S layout

The 2019 SVD December holiday luncheon was a success, with wonderful food and lots of toy and food donations for charity.

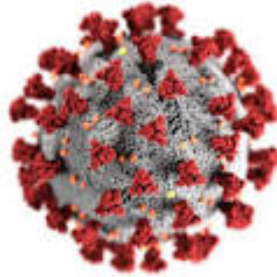
Photos by **Barbara Rohrs** and **John DeHaan**



Down the track

November 7th: SVD Meeting - location to be announced

Due to the ongoing pandemic and COVID-19 restrictions there are no set dates or locations for other events. Members will be notified by Email as each event is scheduled.



Contact us:

Club business: John DeHaan, president - (707) 483-9053 jddehaan@inreach.com

Membership questions: Barbara Rohrs - (916) 730-1415 tjbrr@hotmail.com

TTOS-SVD Mission Statement:

Our mission is to bring together persons interested in the hobby of collecting and operating toy trains. The focus of activities shall be on promoting the best interests of the hobby through fellowship, a sense of good will, camaraderie within the membership, and exposing the general public to the hobby, encouraging greater interest in it and increasing membership.