



The DERAIL

February Meeting

The next meeting will be on February 2nd, 2010. At Bayland Park Community Center.

The Meeting starts at 7:00 pm.

Program - Ed Raines' presentation of "Signals 101"

A look at the history and basic operation of railroad signaling

The Greater Houston Train Show It's Here!!

On February 20, 2010 the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club will host the Greater Houston Train Show. We had sign up sheets at the January meeting and got 13 volunteers to sign up for time slots in addition to the Chairmen/hosts listed below.

Our Chairmen/Task leaders for 2010 include:

- Don Bozman - Vendor table sales.
- Robert Ashcraft - Registrar and managing the front end desk.
- Ed Dibble – Asst Registrar.
- Gilbert Freitag – Treasurer, Assistant Registrar, Clinics Assistant.
- Dave Currey – Clinics Chairman.
- Dave Milton - Clinics Assistant.
- Tracy Mitchell – Contest Chairman.
- Tom Bailey- Managing the San Jacinto Sales Table.
- Dave Shafer – Handling and Scheduling the Switching Layout.
- Steve Sandifer - Advanced Publicity.
- Ed Dibble - Managing our Data Base and sending card notices.
- Byron Spampinato – Layout Tour Chairman
- Yours truly who has everyone's phone number and e-mail.

Note that Byron Spampinato's name has been added since the last listing. I had neglected to get a home layout tour chair by January. Not getting any volunteers at the meeting, and feeling guilty that Byron has set up the last several Fall Tours and Train Show Tours, I emailed him offering to

set up the tours if he would send the phone numbers and emails or the owners. Nothing doing, Byron offered to set up the tours (at least one more time). I appreciated the volunteers who always come through for our Club and Train Show.

We will have sign up sheets at the February meeting. We still have some time slots left to fill. So, please consider donating an hour or two so the folks listed above do not have to spend the entire train show at their assigned task.

The Greater Houston Train Show would not be possible without the hard work of the Club members. Thanks to each of you !!!

See you at the February Meeting • Bob Barnett

GREATER HOUSTON TRAIN SHOW

SATURDAY, February 20, 2010 * 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

In the Beautiful Spacious *
Stafford Centre
10505 Cash Road @ Murphy Rd.

*Easy Directions:
Exit US-59 south at Wilcrest Dr.
(later becomes Murphy Road)
go 1.8 miles south to Cash Rd.
on southeast corner.*

Admission:
Adults - \$6
Children 12 to 18 - \$1
Children Under 12 Free,
Max. \$12.00 per Family
FREE PARKING



• 20,000 Square Feet of: Instructive Clinics, Model & Photo Contest, Operating Layouts, Vendors from across the Southwest, plus Afternoon & Evening Tours of Home Layouts.

Sponsored by: **The SAN JACINTO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB, Inc**

Chairman: Bob Barnett: rbarnett@hrgreen.com 713-660-8820 nights
Vendor Table Sales: Don Bozman: 281-481-0352 don_bozman@att.net

For More Information Visit our Web Site
[web: http://sanjac.leoelair.com](http://sanjac.leoelair.com)

2010 Greater Houston Train Show Clinics

David Curry and his team has put together a comprehensive line-up of Clinics for the 2010 Greater Houston Train Show. We have talent not only from the local area, but some outstanding people from outside of Houston to present modeling techniques and prototype information.

Times and Locations will be posted at the show.

Just Getting Started

Bob Sabol

Are you all pumped up to set up your own model railroad, but just can't take that first step? You have been purchasing train "stuff" for years, but what do you do now? Looking in all those train magazines, you are overwhelmed by the craftsmanship of the layout articles. Can you ever see your railroad in pictures? Does it really matter? Join Bob Sabol as he shares with you the steps he took to start, maintain, and continue an active interest in model railroading for over 20 years in a hobby of fun and relaxation.

LEDs

Jim Hinds and Steve Sandifer

Steve will explain the techniques he has developed to use LEDs in model railroad lighting. He will cover how to hide wires, drill holes, and how to model various kinds of typical light fixtures. Jim Hinds of Richmond Controls will talk about the many uses of surface mount LEDs, particularly as headlights in any scale.

The Texas Special: A Tribute to the MKT

Jim Martel

This is a DVD compilation of home movies taken of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas railroad by MKT employees from the 1950's, 60's, and 70's. Additional footage includes other railroads in the greater Houston area from the same period such as the Texas Chief at Union Station and the Sunset Limited. The video presentation is dedicated to all railroad employees who served our community.

T-Trak Basics and a

Preview of the 2010 National N-Scale Convention

Tom Marsh

This clinic covers the basics of T-Trak: the table-top modular railroading scheme that is gaining in popularity due to its ease of construction, transportation, and set-up. Learn how a basic T-Trak module is built and how easy it is to set up a T-Trak layout. You will also see a preview the 2010 National N Scale Convention, which will take place June 22-26 at the Sugar Land Marriott Town Square, and feature an 88' T-Trak layout.

12 Years Living With DCC

Steve Barkley

Steve will present a survey of DCC--where we've been, what's out there now, and how modelers use DCC. It will cover how he and his friends got into DCC, how they're using it now, and the lessons they've learned. The clinic will be illustrated by a sample layout, various engines, and photos showing the conversion of his home layout from DC to DCC.

How to Clutter Up Your Layout

Chuck Lind

Learn how to take your layout to the next level. This clinic will go over some of the common problems Chuck has seen while visiting other layouts, and explain how to fix them. Detailing your layout with more realistic mini-scenes will lead the viewer into and around your layout.

Texas Association of Railroad Passengers/Amtrak

Henry Wulff

Henry, the president of the Texas Association of Railroad Passengers, will present an overview of passenger railroading in Texas. He will cover Amtrak developments, planned and operating commuter services, light rail lines, and some proposals that are floating around various Texas communities.

Shedding a Light on Electric Railroad Lanterns

David Currey

How important is the railroad lantern? Without lanterns, railroading would be mostly a daylight operation. David will cover the history and development of the electric railroad lantern, how it evolved from the oil lantern, its uses and characteristics, and where it is today technology-wise. See about 36 examples from his private collection—some of which are 100 years old or older. He will also demonstrate common railroad lantern signals.

Model Building Demonstration

Matt Dillow

Matt, a professional model builder from Arkansas, will be building a model of his choice all day in the main room. You will be able to learn and observe the various techniques he uses to obtain realistic results in his structures.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I guess the saying that "Time flies when you're having fun" isn't far from the truth. I've been having fun working on my layout and helping Dave Shafer build his layout, and as I look at the calendar I see that February is here and it's time for our annual Train Show. All the prep work is mostly complete. If you haven't found a slot to help out please see Bob Barnett at the meeting and ask where he can use some help. Also, Byron Spampinato is looking for layouts to be open that Saturday and Sunday, so get in touch with him if you want to show off your railroad.

Next item of fun stuff is the trip to the Texas State Railroad. Plans have been finalized and here are the details. The date of the trip will be March 20, 2010. It will be a STEAM Excursion from Palestine to Rusk and back. It is billed, as their Dogwood Steam Excursion and the spring foliage should be in full bloom by then. We have purchased 50 tickets and secured a 55-passenger bus for the trip. The itinerary will be as follows:

6:15 am Bus departs **Church of Christ @ Stella Link & W Belfort**
7:00 am Bus departs **Larry's Hobbies @ I45 & FM 1960**
10:00 am Bus Arrives at Palestine
11:00 am Train departs Palestine for Rusk
3:30 pm Train arrives Palestine from Rusk
4:00 pm Bus departs Palestine
7:00 pm Bus Arrives Larry's in north Houston
7:45 pm Bus Arrives southwest Houston at church



The cost of the trip will be \$20.00 per person with a limit at this time of a Member and one significant other. Snacks and drinks will be provided for the bus trip. The bus will have restroom facilities and DVD. However, I do not believe it is wheel chair accessible. Lunch will be Dutch treat at Rusk during the 1-½ hour layover. Reservations will be taken at the February meeting and must be paid for by the March meeting. Remember, you must be a full member to take advantage of this opportunity.

Until next time, remember to keep oil in your lanterns and a full head of steam in your boilers.

Robert Ashcraft
President

A few pointers from your friendly neighborhood locomotive engineer

Forwarded from the Yahoo Railspot List

Let's start with some DON'Ts.

- 1) A train is really, really big. Can we all accept that? Not even your Ram/F350/Hummer/ douche-mobile is a match for a locomotive. You say you have a Cummins diesel? Caterpillar? Detroit? Ooooooh. Well I have an EMD 567 on a bad day, and even its pathetic eighteen-hundred horsepower will pound you and your gleaming pickup into the fourth dimension, so please, stay behind the white line!
- 2) I hate blocking crossings. Seriously, I feel like a complete a-hole when I stop a train in the middle of the road and leave two dozen motorists to ponder their lattes and ask what the hell I'm doing. The truth is, sometimes it has to be done, so don't honk at me, flip me off, or scream at me from the window of your Dodge Caravan as you're shooting a U. Instead, be patient and try to believe that there's a point to what I'm doing. It's called switching, and my conductor is depending on me to work slowly and not run his butt over. If you don't believe me, Wiki that.
- 3) Don't climb on the equipment. I hate to sound like your mother, but you're saving me a lot of paperwork and horrifying flashbacks by staying off the equipment. To you it might look like an abandoned train or a free ride, but when that sucker starts to move with you on it, there's a darn good chance you won't be able to hold on. As long as you're on Wikipedia, punch in "slack action" and see what comes up. Also, the romance of riding freight trains is total bs. They're really dark, really cold, really windy, and hobos are freaking scary.
- 4) Don't put stuff on the tracks. It's dangerous to me and my con-

ductor, and it's ten times more dangerous for you and everyone else on the ground. If you're wondering "can a train go over a rock?" the answer is YES. There's only one problem. You probably haven't wondered where the million shards of rock are going to go at four times the speed of sound, have you?

5) Stop whining about the horn. Countless accidents have been avoided because drivers missed the flashing lights but heard the horn. You'd have to blast Miley Cyrus and Lil' Bow Wow pretty loud to drown out a five-chime, and often that's the only thing that saves people. Still, that's no reason to keep your stereo at eighty decibels as you're rolling through a crossing at sixty without looking both ways.

6) By and large, railroad cops are major dirt bags, so when you're trespassing on railroad property, keep your head out of your butt. These guys didn't make it into the real police force, and they will ream your butt inside and out to make up for it. Also, walking on bridges and in tunnels is extremely dangerous. Ask yourself: If a train comes, where will I go? Trains are much wider than the rails they run on, so don't be fooled.

Now for some of the DO'S.

1) If you see a large object (like a garbage can or an F350) that's about to get love-tapped by a hotshot freight train, get in the clear. If the shit's about to fly at a railroad crossing, run to the side of the street that the train is coming from. That way you'll be behind the point of impact and you won't have to worry about catching that beautiful pickup and its over-confident driver square on your shoulders. If you run away from the train you're just putting yourself in the line of fire, and the death toll could very possibly be two.

See Pointers, continued on page 4

Passenger Train Consists • Submitted by Mark Couvillion

COACHES dominated Daytime runs
SLEEPERS dominated Overnight runs
BAGGAGE cars were limited to Long Distance runs.
RPOs were only on SOME trains under contract.
DINERS were added to Distance runs.
LOUNGE cars were added where profitable.
DORMITORY CARS were cars using shared space for

Dining car (& thru) workers.

DOMES were added to deluxe streamlined trains.

PARLOR cars were sometime added as an extra fare coach

OBSERVATION cars were most popular on Long Distance Trains. Heavyweights; later were forerunners of the dome and often included LOUNGE or special accommodations.

A Transcontinental Named train always had a Baggage, Diner, Lounge, and as many Pullman Sleepers as they had passengers for. To that, other cars would be added.

As stated before, the most important considerations are the particular passenger train, railroad, and era. What you are inquiring about would be the "consist" of the passenger train. To give the appropriate consist, it would be necessary to know the info above. Head end cars, as consisted, varied greatly depending on the passenger train. The prototypical head end consist on the passenger train I am modeling right now (late 50's El Capitan / Super Chief) is as follows:

Baggage

RPO

Baggage

Baggage

Baggage/Dormitory

Some passenger trains had no head end cars at all, and some even had express boxcars or reefers (or as with the Santa Fe, COFC express cars made from heavyweight diners) consisted in.

However, generally the RPO was between the engine and baggage cars because the RPO was a secured access car. That kept people from trying to get in the RPO. And yes, the clerks were armed with pistols.

The RPO(mail) can be either between the engine and the baggage cars or mixed - let me explain. Sometimes a working RPO will have a baggage car 'working' with it. Sacks of mail may be in a baggage car ahead of the RPO, and after sorting, the sacks are moved to the baggage section of a typical RPO/Baggage car. Sometimes a pair of RPO/Baggage cars are coupled with the RPO sections together, and one 'end' is used for either opening or storing pouch mail. The GN 'Winnipeg Ltd' had this arrangement as it sorted 'International' mail on the St Paul-Winnipeg overnight run. When I was growing up, one of our neighbors was an RPO clerk on this run. The baggage part was next to the engine, and was for storing International mail after sorting. The rear baggage section was for checked baggage. In later years, the train also carried a TOFC car with 'sealed' trailers of international mail (like your MR magazine). There was a small door between the RPO section and the baggage section - locked from the RPO end of the wall. This allowed two full working 30' RPOs on this very heavy mail route.

Normal RPO operation usually had the RPO right behind the engine, but special routings/etc can change this. If you put the RPO between the baggage section or baggage car and the rest of the train, the 'messenger/baggage man' is now trapped (better have good heat in that baggage car!).

The RPO and baggage cars would generally be on the head end behind the engines. The RPO in the middle of several baggage cars so sorted mail could be stored at either end of the RPO. Some of the mail filled baggage cars might be set out in route. Generally the dining car would be between the coaches and the first class. Very long trains might have several dining cars. An observation lounge car might bring up the rear. Some premier trains had no coaches. They were all first class. The 20th Century limited offered barber and secretarial services to cater to their first class clients.

There would never be a reefer in the middle of the consist. No thru access. Reefers in passenger trains were for express shipments and were generally carried on the head end unless part of a block that got put on the rear (secondary trains). Any re-provisioning of the kitchen would be done en-route at major stations where commissary facilities were located. Or, if in a real pinch, the crew would telegraph the agent at the next station, who would make arrangements to get a special order (such as milk for a trainload of women with babies) purchased locally and on board.

On a lot of the 1940-1950's trains with a coach lounge or lunch counter as well as the diner, the diner was located in the Pullmans and the other food service car was in the middle of or brought up the rear of the chair cars. RPOs could be anywhere on the front depending on the way the car was worked.

Pointers from an Engineer

Continued from page 3

2) If the gates stay down and the lights stay flashing, stay where you are. I guaran-- tee there's another train coming, and speeding onto the tracks the moment the first train clears is a lot like celebrating a touchdown too early. WHAM.

3) When you're waiting for a train to pass, it's a good idea to stay back thirty or forty feet. Trains are operated by professionals, but often they're loaded by total assclowns. I've heard some real nasty stories about payloads falling off flatcars and crushing people in their vehicles, or doors sliding off boxcars and ripping through everything in their path. It's rare, but stuff happens!

4) Always report problems or suspicious activity. If you see a photographer with a radio scanner and a big notebook, ignore him. We know that guy. But if there's a dude in street clothes working a crowbar through a signal box, hit us up and tell us what the deal is. Railroad crossings usually have signs with emergency numbers, or you can call the non-emergency number for your local fuzz. If an accident has already occurred or a life is at risk, call 911 instead. Pretty sure they have our number.

5) Last but not least, when you're inconvenienced by a train, remember that we're pulling for you! Trains are a great way to conserve fuel, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and keep American jobs alive and green. Rail technology is the best solution to our energy crisis, and as the rail network grows in the years to come, it's important for everyone to stay safe. Look, listen, LIVE.



STATE OF THE RAIL

I stated in my column last month that I was embarking on a long-overdue vacation to South Africa. I have just returned and have two items of interest to share with you.

The first item concerns the state of the railways in that far-off ex-steam empire and the second item that I will review next month, will be about the amazing state of railway modeling in that country.

As I feared, railway travel has taken a back-seat as far as the government is concerned and this has affected both rail-tourism and the preservation of steam locomotives and rolling stock. For example, The Red Devil was South Africa's last steam locomotive – a 4-8-4 Class 26 that was rebuilt in 1981 from an original Class 25 built in 1953.



It was SAR's final attempt to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of steam locomotives - a last stab for steam against the flood of dieselization. Unfortunately, as impressive as the engine was - it reputedly had 35 percent less coal and 27 percent less water consumption, with a 50% increase in maximum drawbar horsepower – it was past its time and never went into full service. It could however have been used to lure tourists on the few remaining steam rail tours but instead, the Red Devil is sitting in a dark, lonely corner in Cape Town Station where it is looked after but from what I heard is not in working condition.



Even if she was workable, the politics regarding steam on the rails is sensitive and qualified drivers are obviously in short supply.

Other opportunities also abound. For example, the Outeniqua Choo Choo - one of the most famous trains, travels over one of the most picturesque lines in the world.



Despite the existing and promised-future tourist trade however, the government has stated that it intends to stop operations unless a private company or individual is willing to lease the train and the line.

The only positive rail news concerns the Gautrain – an 80-kilometre, standard gauge railway that is being built in Johannesburg for the 2010 World Cup Soccer games.

The Gautrain system will have 24 train sets each consisting of four cars, designed to run at an operational speed of 100 miles per hour on completely new track – much of it underground –

from the international airport to the city suburbs and on to Pretoria. Of the 96 rail cars, ten are specially customized for use on the airport link and contain extra luggage space and wider seats. The other 86 rail cars are designed for commuter services.

The Gautrain project will cost over 4 billion dollars and is to be completed in time for the World Cup games that begin later this year.



If any of you plan to go to SA for the World Cup or just on holiday, this is the time to go. The country is still relatively safe, the dollar goes quite a long way and the scenery is spectacular as are the wild-animal safaris. Remember though that in the southern hemisphere, the seasons are reversed (it is summer there now), so pack accordingly.

The biggest drawback is the travel time there and back! Depending upon your route, plan for an absolute minimum of 30 hours travel time from door to door, and since the time difference is 8 hours ahead of Houston (7 hours during daylight-savings time), plan also for an extended period of jet-lag.

Next month, I will discuss the state of model railways in South Africa – an amazing and encouraging story for us all.

I wish you again all of the very best in 2010.

Trivia!

The first of the famous "Big Boy" locomotive series were built in what year?

- a). 1941
- b). 1942
- c). 1943
- d). 1944

What's a cornfield meet?

- a). An excessively jarring coupling
- b). Head-on collision away from a station
- c). Meeting trains at a track siding
- d). Side tracked train

The UK term is "regulator". What is it called in the US?

- a). Brake stand
- b). Reverser
- c). Throttle
- d). Johnson bar

"Doubling a hill" refers to _____.

- a). Using two locomotives to climb a hill
- b). Extra engineer for night/mountain runs
- c). Attacking the hill at a higher (2X) speed
- d). Splitting the train and making 2 trips

The first US locomotive boiler explosion (1831) occurred when the fireman _____.

- a). sat on the hissing safety valve
- b). allowed the boiler to run dry
- c). flooded the hot boiler with cold water
- d). loosened a stuck valve with a hammer

Meeting minutes for January 5, 2010

President Robert Ashcraft called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM and wished everyone a happy new year.

We had 3 visitors.

Vice president David Currey introduced our clinic: "The Beer Line" by Tom Bailey.

The Beer Line is a 6-1/2 mile long Chestnut subdivision in Milwaukee. Tom explained how it started in North Milwaukee where 3 lines came together and proceeded south and east through many industries including tanneries, machine shops, steel fab shops, and especially Schlitz beer facilities. Many of the shops along the line such as bottle cap and can producers were mostly there to support the Schlitz facilities. Reefer car repair shops in this area also mostly worked on Schlitz cars. At the peak, 116 car loads of just bottle caps, were needed by Schlitz. Although other breweries existed, Schlitz was by far the major producer of the area.

In the 1970's there was a death and thus change in management in Schlitz. Soon after the quality of the packaging and of the beer itself began to decline. Schlitz's revenue thus dropped greatly and so did production. The Beer Line began to be cut back in total mileage until finally in the 1990's there were no more customers left to service on the Beer Line, and the last rails were pulled up.

2-8-0's and 2-8-2's were used in the early years and later replaced by FM diesels and then MP15's.

We had a second program: a video "Sante Fe – Loaded for WAR" presented by Steve Sandifer. It illustrated how the Sante Fe RR played a large roll in transporting supply's, troops, and tanks in the WWII effort. The video showed all the efforts required to get every available locomotive and piece of rolling stock on line to aide in the effort.

Next month's meeting will be by Ed Rains on signals.

Refreshments were thanks to David Currey and Virginia Freitag.

Bob Barnett volunteered to bring them next month.

Treasurer's report, Gilbert Freitag:

\$7,571.53 Opening Balance

Expenses:

\$1972.86 – Texas State RR tickets

\$75.77 – Flowers for Rosalie Milton

Income:

\$745.00 2010 Train Show table sales

\$6267.90 Ending balance with all bills paid.

Minutes for December were approved as published.

Division 8 / LSR:

Ray Byer

Watch the Waybill for the next meeting

There was a LSR meeting in San Antonio about the upcoming 2010 convention.

Ray is up for re-election as division director.

We still need some youths to sponsor for LSR if you know of someone.

NMRA: No report

DeRail: No report

Old Business:

The Texas State RR trip – Sat March 20th – 50 tickets available

See derail for details

New Business:

Bob Barnett reminded us of the upcoming February 20 train show.

All major assignments have been made, hourly volunteers are always welcome/needed at the last minute.

Several layouts will be set-up and may need help early that morning. Bob brought up the home layout tour associated with the show. Should we try to expand or contract the times/number of layouts? No real comments were presented. We need to think about this.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM

General comments: 57 people were present at the meeting.

-Respectfully submitted, Gilbert Freitag, Secretary / Treasurer



Meetings are the First Tuesdays of January through December at the Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet. Meeting time is 7 to 9 pm. Visitors are welcome.

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