



The DERAIL

VOL. 41 No. 5

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE SAN JACINTO MODEL RAILROAD CLUB, INC.

MAY 2010

April Meeting

The next meeting will be on May 4th, 2010. At Bayland Park Community Center.

The Meeting starts at 7:00 pm.

Program - Steve Sandifer's Howard Branch of the ATSF by Tom Bailey

Union Pacific 844 Visit to South Texas



Photo by Doug Jackson

See UP 844 continued on page 2



844 east of Navasota, Tx - Byron Spampinato



Houston Amtrak - Bill Pierrard



Houston Amtrak - Dennis Grigassy



Douglas Milton



Houston Amtrak - David Gilchrist



Houston Amtrak - David Gilchrist

Static Grass Applicator Parts List

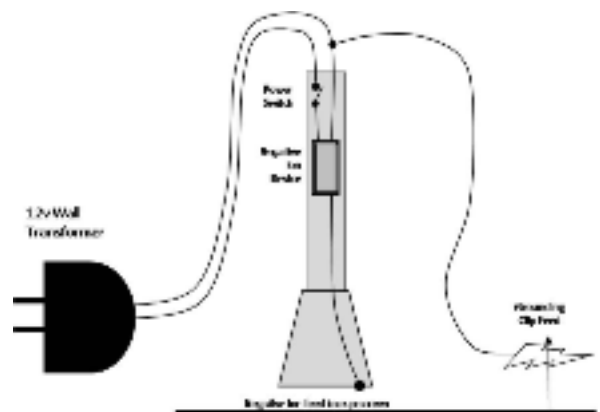
Oakley Electronics	www.oakleyelectronics.com	
12VDC, 8KVA output Negative Ion Generator		\$12
The Electric Goldmine	www.goldmine-elec.com	
Heavy Duty 12VDC 500ma Adapter		\$2.95
Lowes		
1 1/2" x 12" PVC Sink Tailpiece	Item 2428	\$2.43
1 1/2" PVC Plug		\$0.96
Radio Shack		
Size M Panel Mount Coaxial Power Jack	Part# 274-1582	\$3.29
Mini SPST Toggle Switch	Part#275-324	\$2.99
Alligator Clips (pk of 8)	Part# 270-1540	\$2.99

Misc Items

Small Cup with Lid (3" dia x 4" tall, apx 8-16 oz)
 Approx 4"x4" aluminum screen
 Asst Screws, washers, nuts, spade connectors
 18-22 gauge wire

Links for more information

Joe Fugate's Siskiyou Line – <http://siskiu-railfan.net>
 Joe's Scenery DVD's – <http://model-trains-video.com>
 Railroad e-zine (Free) – <http://model-railroad-hobbyist.com>
 Static Grass Applicator – <http://racooke.com>
 Scenic Express – <http://www.scenicexpress.com>





DCC SOUND - #1

If you are a steam-buff like me, you will agree that there is absolutely no comparison between just seeing a beautiful steam loco hauling a long goods or passenger train around a layout, versus seeing as well as hearing it chuff and whistle, as it crosses bridges and disappears into tunnels. The new DCC sound chips have now made this all available and I am in my element!

I vividly remember being in one of our local model railroad shops a few years ago and suddenly coming across a display of newly-released DCC sound-chips. My imagination went into overdrive! Could I really have sound in my steam engines? My excitement level rose - only to be tempered by my concern about my ability to get this new technology to work! How did it in fact work? Where did the sound come out? Obviously from a speaker, but how was it connected to the chip and to the loco, and where should it be installed? The questions coursed through my mind and since I did not dare open the \$100-plus packet to read whatever instructions it contained, I asked one of the hovering sales people for assistance. The response wasn't heartening. "I really don't know too much about it," he mumbled, "but I've heard good things about sound chips, so why not just buy it and you can then let us know how you did with it!" Great! The blind leading the blind!

I did not buy the chip that day but later on, I took the plunge into sound and have never looked back. Today almost all of my steam and diesel loco's have sound chips in them and what an amazing difference it makes.

If you have never installed sound in a loco before however, be warned! In all likelihood, your first attempt will not go without at least one major problem, and you should also be prepared to be frustrated – both during and after the installation.

The first issue arises after you get home with your first DCC sound chip and speaker. You enter your workroom, eager to add the sounds of realism to your trains, only to find out that apparently, speakers require baffles - sealed chambers that prevent the loss of the speaker's sound-generating capability. So you decide to quickly go out and get one but by that time, the shops have closed and since you absolutely cannot wait another day to hear your engine roar (?) around the track, you decide to create a baffle out of old bits of styrene.

So you create a baffle and then gluing it first to your fingers and then to the speaker, you are finally ready to install the chip, speaker and baffle, into the loco. That is when the second problem arises.

When DCC chips first came onto the scene, all we had to do was to connect the wires as instructed and then put it somewhere in the loco – usually in the boiler or tender if it was a steam loco, or within the main body if it was a diesel. That was too easy! DCC sound chips provide the added complication of being somewhat larger, so you have to fit them plus at least one speaker-with-home-built baffle into the same available space!

It is at this point that you will wish that you were modeling in G gauge or at least S gauge, because it will quickly become obvious that there is no way that you will get both the chip and the speaker into the small space available. You therefore start reviewing your options. A smaller chip? Not practical (see my column next month for a review of the

smaller DCC sound chips). Maybe install a smaller speaker? Also not practical – that is assuming that you actually want to hear the engine sound over the regular noises in a train-room.

So your choices narrow down to one of three options. The first is to return the chip for credit and to tell everyone thereafter that anyone crazy enough to try to install sound in a loco, is plumb-loco.

The second option is to connect the chip to the loco as usual, but to then install both it and the speaker elsewhere – say in a trailing box-car! If you select this option however, be aware that from that day onwards, that car will never be able to be uncoupled from the loco. I call it the Siamese-Trailing Railcar or STAR for short.

The last option is to separate the chip from the baffle and speaker location. This seems to work better with steam loco's where for example, the chip can be hidden in the boiler while the speaker is located in the tender, but it will work just as well for diesels as long as you always have an A and a B unit coupled together. In this case, the chip can go into the A unit while the speaker goes into the B unit, and note again that the STAR paradox will occur here as well.

Next month, I will get serious about some of the real issues involved in sound installations.



Filling Sand in 844 a bag at a time - David Gilchrist



San Antonio, TX
June 2nd - 6th, 2010
for more information, go to
<http://alamorails.org>

San Jac Texas State Railroad Trip

By Ronald Burns

Saturday, March 20, 2010, was the Texas State Railroad Trip sponsored by our club. About 12 people caught the bus at the Church of Christ and more boarded at our stop at Larry's Hobbies. I think a total of 33 people made the bus trip.

The bus was clean and comfortable. With my back problems, I normally can't ride on a bus for more than an hour and a half to two hours. I didn't have any back problems on this trip. Our bus driver Michelle and her GPS system brought us to Palestine and back on schedule and without getting lost or making any wrong turns. She has British accent and later I found out that she is from South Africa.

When we left Houston, the temperature was around 50 degrees Fahrenheit. On the way up the cold front came in and when we arrived in Palestine the temperature was substantially colder and it was raining. I'm glad my wife always brings her bag of stuff with the umbrellas. I think the drop in temperature caught most of by surprise.

David Currey picked up the tickets for our group and handed them out. He also had some disappointing news. The steam engine that was going to be pulling our train from Palestine to Rusk was having mechanical problems and our train would be pulled by a diesel locomotive. We were joined in the depot by several San Jac members who had driven up on their own.

Since we had plenty of time before we could board the train, we decided to pre-order our lunch so it would be ready when the train arrived in Rusk. You do this at the Ticket Booth. Monetta and I were the first from the San Jac group to order. This created some confusion for the ticket agent because they use the Reservation Number for the food order and all of the San Jac group tickets had the same Reservation Number. She asked me what my name was and then it took a few minutes for her to do what she had to do to set it up so each party from our group could order their own food. She then printed out tickets with my name on them for our order. Later on we found out that the lunch tickets for other parties from our group had my name on them.

The last time my wife and I were here, they took your food order on the train and phoned it in to the depot and when you arrived your order was in a sack with your name on it. This time with so many orders with my name on them, I began to wonder how difficult it was going to be for each of us to get the correct food. As it turned this was not the problem.

The depot also has a gift shop, so Monetta and I looked to see what we could find. I collect patches and wanted one for the Texas State Railroad. The clerk said that they were out but they had 5 at the Rusk Depot Gift Shop. I found a coffee mug I liked and bought it.

By now it was time to board the train for Rusk. The tickets for our group were all for Coach Car Number 44. It was still raining some so out the umbrellas came. Our train was being pulled by Diesel Locomotive No. 7; an Alco RS2 built in 1947. This locomotive was originally built for the Point Comfort & Northern Railroad of Lolita, Texas. The Point Comfort & Northern was owned and operated by Alcoa (Aluminum Company of America) and served their aluminum manufacturing plant at Point Comfort, Texas. Alcoa donated it to the Texas State Railroad in 1975.

After one long blast of the horn at 11 am we departed Palestine and headed for Rusk. The 25 mile trip takes one and a half hours. An announcement said that the train would reach a top speed of 25 mph. We may have reached the 25 mph mark, but the speed was up and down (mostly down) the entire trip.

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The weather was not cooperating. The cold and rain made the windows fog up. People had to wipe them every few minutes just to see out and even then visibility was poor. The seats were comfortable and the track was not too rough. Soon several people noticed that one of the ceiling light fixtures was about half full of water with several things floating around. Evidently the roof had a leak, but the bowl on the fixture never got above half full. After a while we had some unexpected visitors, or should I say a saloon girl named Miss. Kitty and several train robbers. They were nice and explained that all donations were given to needy children.

Our car did not have any heat, but it wasn't too cold until about midway to Rusk when we reached Mewshaw Siding and stopped. This is where our train and the train that left Rusk at the same time we left Palestine meet and pass. We were on the main and the Rusk to Palestine train took the siding. That's when people opened windows or went to the open air car to get a better view of the meet. The Rusk to Palestine train was pulled by steam engine No. 300, a 2-8-0 built by Baldwin in 1917.

When we arrived at Rusk and tried to get our food we found out there were different lines for food depending on what you had ordered and the help didn't seem to fully understand where we should go. We finally got through the confusion, got our food, and then began to find a place to eat. The benches outside the depot were full, so Monetta and I went inside to find a warmer place. We each had the Cheeseburger Combo. The meat was very good, just not hot enough.

While we were standing and eating, I heard a girl singing and looked around to find out what was going on. I discovered a small theater on one end of the depot. There were benches inside and some people were sitting, eating, and listening to the young lady singing and playing a guitar. I went and got Monetta and that's where we finished our lunch. The young lady sang several songs and also played the harmonica and guitar on one song. Her name is Lauren Alexander. She performs Texas Country music and she has several CDs.

After lunch, I went to the gift shop to purchase the patch I wanted. By this time there were only two patches left. I bought one and someone else from our group bought the last one.

We then boarded the train for the return trip to Palestine. The train left on schedule and the weather had cleared up some. We could see better, but not many dogwood or redbud trees in bloom. I guess the colder and later than normal winter was causing later blooming. The trains met at

See Burns, continued pg 5



These pictures show a tank car loading device at a Santa Fe house track near the Alvin, TX station.



Four highway tankers fill one railroad tank car for transport to Beaumont, TX



Submitted by Dave Milton - Photos by Pam Laucher

A Team Track Industry

Steve Sandifer

As modelers we are always looking for an industry that we can model that take up very little space on our layouts. Here is one I photographed at Thanksgiving, 2009, while visiting my family in Abilene, TX. All it takes is a team track and a bit of a parking area.

BML Crude Oil Marketing makes much of their living going to the ranches around Abilene picking up crude oil from those tanks that are frequently seen in small oil fields. In



this case, the crude oil is from Canada, and it has been shipped to Abilene in TILX 190945 30,000 gal. tank car. BML will trans-



fer the crude to its highway tanker and then drive it 6 miles to its pipeline connection where it will be injected into a pipe line headed for Houston. It will take 4 trips by the tank truck to empty the

rail car. In the back of the company pickup truck is a 55 gallon drum which contains a charcoal filter. As oil fills the highway tanker, the air in the tank is filtered to eliminate odors.

Texas State Railroad - Burns, continued

Mewshaw Siding and passed. We arrived at the Palestine Depot on time. Most of us boarded the bus. A few members went to the engine building to see the 2-10-4 Texas & Pacific 610 Locomotive inside. I had seen this engine several times and didn't want to get out in the cold for another look.

On the way back to Houston, we stopped someplace not too far from Palestine where Loren Neufeld on the way to Palestine had spotted a row of old buildings close to the highway. Loren got off the bus and took photographs of them. There must have been a half dozen or more in a line next to each other. The weathering was outstanding. I expect to see them again as some of Loren's award winning models. We made one more stop in Crocket at a McDonalds where some of us got coffee or hot chocolate.

Even though the weather was not perfect and we didn't get a steam engine, I had a lot of fun and really enjoyed the train ride. I had my camera, but didn't take many photos because of the cold and rain.



Meeting minutes for April 5, 2010

President Robert Ashcraft called the meeting to order at 7:05PM.

We had 3 visitors.

Vice president David Currey introduced the night's clinic "Locomotives of the Red River And Gulf R.R. In Louisiana" by Everett Lueck. This presentation could also have been titled " The Roster of a Short Line R.R., The Crowell Lumber Company Railroad. 84 miles of "mainline" and number branch miles accounted for over an average of over 100 miles of trackage in service at any give time. The railroad was used to get the fresh cut logs from the forest to the local mill and the finish lumber to the interchange with other distributing railroads. The first method of moving log cars was actually having them pulled by ox. A 200 ton shay, #1, was the company's first locomotive. It had a small 12' long, 55 tube boiler and was used into the 1930's. Pieces of this locomotive still exist on the site today. This shady was followed by a 28 ton shay-#2, a 2-6-2 Red River & Gulf #1, a 36 ton shay, two 4-6-0 ten wheelers, a 2-60 Mougel #202 (bought new), a 2-6-2 #303 and later #200, a 4-6-0 #400 (a wood burner) and #300 – that was later converted to oil. 4-40 #104 – was the R.R's first coal burner and it was used for a 70 mile long passenger service run.

Everett covered the history of all the locomotives, explaining which were bought new and which were bought new and also where each one ended up – scrapped or sold to other railroads. In July of 1954 the R.R. was shut down.

Next month's clinic will on Steve Sandifer's Howard Branch of the ASTF by Tom Bailey.

Refreshments were thanks to Diane Tolley and Gilbert Freitag. Tom Bailey will bring them next month.

Treasurer's report, Gilbert Freitag:

\$11038.25 Opening Balance

Expenses:

\$264.78 – Train show expense\$2000.00 – Deposit to City of Staford for 2011 Show

Income:

\$220.00 – Rusk trip sales

\$8993.47 Ending balance with all bills paid.

Minutes for March were approved as published.

LSR:

Tracy Mitchell San Antonio Convention, June 2-6, registration goes up \$10 on the 17th.

Division 8:

Ray Byer There are plans for a picnic at the Alvin station on May 8 and 11AM, bring a lawn chair.

The clinic session will start in May, one Saturday a month at the Houston R.R. Museum

We still need a Division Youth nominee to sponsor.

NMRA: No report

DeRail: Dave Milton thanked those authors that have contributed to the Derail.

Old Business:

Staford Train Show

Bob Barnett gave us a recap of the event. We had approximately \$4300 in profits. A motion was made to distribute \$100 more to each of the club layouts, and passed.

New Business:

Bob Weere is offering his services to make trees from anyone interested.

Tracy Mitchell is schedule to get married to Corra the Saturday after next Easter.

UP's 8444 is coming to Houston the 14th and th 18th.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55PM

General comments: 51 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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