



July Meeting

The next meeting will be on July 6th, 2010. At Bayland Park Community Center.
The Meeting starts at 7:00 pm.
Program - "Operation Lifesaver" by Steve McNeil

NWX Public Show at Memorial City Mall Father's Day Weekend

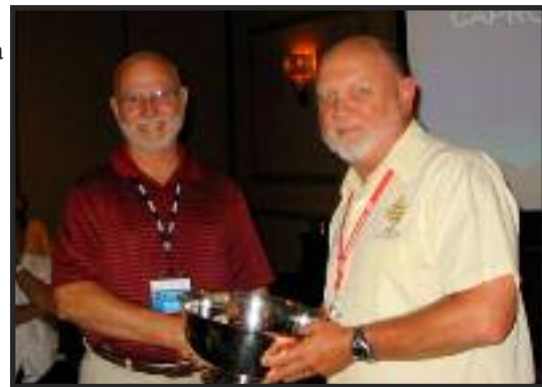


Photos by Bill Pierrard

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Freitag-Loeffler Awarded at 2010 LSR

It was a pleasure and a privilege to present the Freitag-Loeffler Award at this year's Lone Star Region convention, held in San Antonio. The award



was first presented in 1963, as the John E. (Pop) Loeffler Award, in recognition of outstanding service to the hobby and in particular, service to the Lone Star Region. The award was in honor of San Jacinto Model Railroad Club member Pop Loeffler and has been presented by the club for the past 47 years. In 2009, the club voted to change the name of the award to the Freitag-Loeffler Award so that we could honor another outstanding member of our club and the modeling community, Gil Freitag.

This year's honoree is Jerry Hoverson, MMR. Jerry resides in McKinney, TX and has been a part of the hobby since childhood, when he and his dad built their first layout. Jerry joined the NMRA through the Rocky Mountain Region in the late 1970's. As a 20yr veteran of the United States Military he had the opportunity to start several layouts, as the military tends to move you around frequently. After settling permanently in the Dallas area he has constructed a great home layout, served as president of the South Side Railroad Modelers in downtown Dallas, been the coordinator of layout tours for the annual Plano Train Show and served as last year's convention chairman for the LSR. He earned MMR #347 and is presently serving as the Division 3 Director of the LSR. Jerry is the 51st recipient of the award and a very deserving one. I hope you will join with me in extending our best wishes and congratulations to Jerry.

Robert Ashcraft
President, SJMRC

Fire damages historic train bridge Threatens tourist economy

CHAMA (KRQE) - A mysterious fire has dealt a devastating blow to the tourist economy in northern New Mexico as it slowly burns a historic bridge to the ground.

The burning bridge sits just outside of Chama. It is part of the Cumbres and Toltec Railroad Service that funnels hundreds of tourist into the small mountain town every week.

Chama Mayor Archie Vigil said during the season about 500 tourists will visit Chama, on a good week.

"It's very crucial, it's a big impact," Vigil said.

The town's economic security is now being threatened. Around 11:30 p.m., Wednesday,



fire crews were called out to the burning bridge.

The Lobato Trestle, the highest bridge on the scenic tour, was fully engulfed. The flames ravaged the through the majority of it. Fire officials said within a few hours, burning railroad ties started falling into the creek below and started catching brush and trees on fire.

Fire officials said the steep terrain made it difficult for crews to fight the fire, so they decided to allow the fire to burn out on its own.

Cumbres and Toltec Railroad Service officials announced they would put the scenic tours from Chama on hold and tourists would be bused to Antonito, until the bridge is fixed.

It could take weeks to replace the charred railroad ties. However, it will take even longer if the structure is compromised.

Fire officials said the heat already proved to be too much for parts of metal structure.

"From the heat of the fire, it did bow out some of the track out," Ware said.

Ware said the good news is the track is slowly moving back in place as the bridge cools. Yet, some still worry it may be too late and that the structure was already weakened.

Replacing the entire bridge could mean Chama residents will not see the main scenic tour leave their town for the rest of the season.

Vigil worries that Chama will become a shuttle station and tourists will not stay in town long enough to visit shops and stores.

"Right now the way the economy is, we didn't need this," Vigil said.

Fire crews still don't know how the fire started. Bridge inspectors will have to determine how much is lost and how much can be saved, if any.

The bridge was installed back in 1883. The railroad service from Chama to Antonito has been running since the 1880s. The scenic tours started 40 years ago.

Fire crews from the New Mexico Forestry Department, Bureau of Land Management and several county and volunteer fire departments helped control the fire.

Railroad crews tried to dismantle what had not burned to get rid of any materials that could fuel the fire.

Submitted by Chris Tolley

Progress Rail Services to Acquire Electro-Motive Diesel, Creating Global Locomotive Manufacturing and Rail Services Company

ALBERTVILLE, Ala.—Progress Rail Services has signed a definitive agreement to purchase Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD) for \$820 million in cash from Berkshire Partners LLC and Greenbriar Equity Group LLC. Upon completion of the transaction, EMD will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Progress Rail. Progress Rail is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Caterpillar Inc. (NYSE: CAT).

"This acquisition represents the latest step in our strategic plan to aggressively grow our presence in the global rail industry," said Caterpillar Vice Chairman and CEO Elect Doug Oberhelman. "Including today's announcement and our acquisition of Progress Rail, Caterpillar has invested about \$2 billion since 2006 to grow our profitable rail and transit businesses. Rail has proven to be a highly efficient and sustainable method for moving freight and people, and we see a positive long-term future for the continued growth of the rail industry."

Progress Rail Services is one of the largest providers of rail and transit products and services in North America, including: locomotive upgrade and repair, railcar remanufacturing, trackwork, rail welding, rail repair and replacement, signal design and installation, maintenance of way equipment, parts reclamation and recycling.

"The acquisition of EMD will enable us to provide rail and transit customers an industry-leading range of locomotive, engine and emissions solutions, as well as unmatched aftermarket product and parts support and a full line of rail-related services and solutions," said Progress Rail CEO Billy Ainsworth.

With 2009 revenues of \$1.8 billion, EMD has the largest installed base of dieselelectric locomotives in the world and offers the most extensive range of locomotive products in the rail and transit industry.

"We feel this is an ideal fit for EMD and our customers and we look forward to developing and providing an even greater portfolio of products and services for the rail and transit industry that we have proudly served for more than 85 years," said John S. Hamilton, president and CEO of Electro-Motive Diesel.

"We are very proud to have had the opportunity to partner with EMD's management in rebuilding this rail industry icon," said Regg Jones, managing partner of Greenbriar. "Having redirected the company's strategy and restored EMD back to strong operating and financial footing, we are confident EMD will continue its growth and success with Progress Rail."

Richard Lubin, managing director of Berkshire Partners, added, "Our objectives coming in were to transition EMD to a strong, independent company focused on its customers, invest in EMD's technology and capabilities and drive operational improvement. We are delighted Progress Rail will be the new owner of this business."

The acquisition is expected to close by the end of 2010, pending final regulatory approvals. EMD will remain headquartered in LaGrange, Ill. John Hamilton will continue as president and CEO of EMD and will report to Billy Ainsworth.

Submitted by Don Formanek



CRY THE BELOVED COUNTRY

The title above is the name of a novel written by Alan Paton, a South African (SA) author, in 1948. This masterpiece was later converted into a play and also into a motion picture starring Sidney Poitier, and although the book was about life in that country during the late 1940's, the title can justifiably be applied to the sorrowful state of the railways there today. Three recent items are worth reviewing in this regard.

The first item concerns the Gautrain - the new high-speed 'wonder' brought to the country for the FIFA (Soccer) World Cup. Soon after the award was announced, the decision was taken to build a high-speed rail link to carry the avid fans from the airport to downtown Johannesburg, then to the main suburban shopping areas, and finally, to Pretoria - roughly 35 miles away. Today, \$3.5 Billion later, the train is in operation.



Needless to say however, politics reared its ugly head and instead of adhering to SA's extensive 3'6" Cape gauge, the Gautrain ('Gold' train), was built on a 4'8½" gauge - the country's first standard gauge train. Why make the change at this time? Why spend billions of dollars on an incompatible railway that cannot be operated anywhere else in the country and that cannot use any existing railway equipment? Why spend billions on a train that will be used mainly by affluent travelers, in a country where poverty is widespread? The answer is probably the same the world-over: politics.

The next item concerns a recent derailment of the luxury Rovos passenger tourist train.



The final portion of this exclusive journey is always completed under steam and as usual, the electric loco stopped to allow the steam engine to take over. This time however, after the electric unit was uncoupled and moved away, the

train started to move and although a manager and some loco staff applied hand-brakes to three carriages, it was not enough to stop the mo-

mentum on the decline. The train travelled for about 6 miles and then derailed due to excessive speed across the points leading into the station. The end result can be seen below.



Tragically, 3 Rovos employees were killed but thankfully none of the 55 passengers on board, most of whom were from America, were seriously injured. The accident appears to be the result of a lack of training as well as

a prime case of the Peter Principle where "in a hierarchy every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence."

Finally, another rail tragedy. This was Class 15F steam locomotive #3117 last month.



On Father's Day, it overturned, together with its coal tender and water tank.

The train carrying 627 tourists derailed because thieves removed some 40 wooden sleepers during the

night. No-one was hurt, but the locomotive - which dedicated volunteers had spent many years restoring to working order - was substantially damaged.

Sleeper theft is endemic in South Africa because they are made from hard Australian Yarra wood that is highly prized for making furniture and sometimes for firewood. Some lines have been closed because so many sleepers have been stolen, that the cost of replacement has become uneconomic.

Yesterday's derailment happened on a line that sees many tourist trains during the year but the thieves don't care about the consequences either for innocent passengers or for tourism as a whole.

The cost of repairing the locomotive will be a heavy burden for the club which receives no funding other than what it earns from running tourist trains, and the cost of repairing the damaged track will run into many thousands of rand.



Cry the Beloved Country!

Meeting minutes for June 2, 2010

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

We had 1 visitor.

Vice president David Currey introduced the night's clinic:

"Sawdust, It Is Not Trash Anymore", by Craig Brantley

Craig presented a technique of using a styrofoam base, plaster cloth, and finally plaster rock casting for mountains. He explained how casting can be hard cats and then glued on or wet cast in place. The wet cast method allows you to lap the next mold on top of the previous mold and then carve it while it is still fairly soft to blend the transition point. Craig uses acrylics in spray bottles to color the castings, along with India ink (do not use black ink, it will look purple) once the casting are thoroughly dry. Craig puts extra black in the creases and water run off areas first, then adds the primary rock colors on top in horizontal bands to highlight. This is then over sprayed with a base color to blend things together.

Craig puts ball bearing in the spray bottle to help mix the paint when you shake it up. Remember, the colors will dry lighter. Start light and add more later if needed, you can't make it lighter later.

Craig next demonstrated the sawdust ground cover process. He originally picked up a method from Jon Adison aka the "ground goop". This used paint, vermiculite, white glue, and celluclay. The ingredients seemed too costly. Craig modified the process to us "free" sawdust. It should be fine but not powder. You start with sawdust in a bowl, add a very small amount of water to dampen the sawdust. Next add a capfull of Lysol (to prevent mold) and the white glue until the mix is like cookie dough. You then press the mix to any place on the scenery you wish to have ground cover, especially between rock castings on steep slopes. You let this dry, paint it a base color with cheap latex paint, coat with white glues, then cover with ground foam or Woodland Scenics - Static Grass (Craig's preference).

Next month's clinic will be "Operation Life Saver", by Steve McNeal.

Refreshments were thanks to Rex Ritz.

Angie Caulking will bring them next month.

Treasurer's report, Gilbert Freitag:

Expenses: none

Income: none

\$9920.67 Ending balance with all bills paid.

Minutes for May were approved as published.

LSR:

San Antonio Convention, June 2-6, starts tomorrow. Ron Burns noted that the website listed layouts open in Buda on the way to and from the convention.

Division 8: Tracy Mitchell

The clinic session at the Houston R.R. Museum, 7390 Mesa Road will be on June 19 at 10 AM by Tracy Mitchell on weathering wood or Paul C. on Fast Tracks. 13 attended last months clinic.

NMRA: No report

DeRail: No Report

Old Business:

-none

New Business:

Jim Hinds is looking for an article in MR about the ABC's of signaling. Bob Barnett thinks he has this in a small booklet form and will try to locate it.

The National N Scale Convention is coming to town 6/20-6/26. Jim thanked all those who have provided great support for this event, even from a lot of non N Scalers in the Houston area

Doug Milton is setting up a club Facebook page "San Jacinto Model Railroad Club", all spelled out.

Robert Ashcraft brought up how 100% NMRA clubs get renewed in November. A motion was made to continue our participation in this program for insurance of the club and its members. The motion passed.

Gilbert Freitag gave a summary of Gil Freitag's recovery. He is finally back home and getting in home therapy several times a week. He is showing improvement on a daily basis, is in good spirits, eating solid foods by himself, working on motor skills and speech.

Craig Brantley brought up that the May/June issue of the Narrow Gauge Gazette had a nice write-up on the Sn3 Symposium.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35PM

General comments: 46 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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