



The DERAIL

The Official Monthly Publication of the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, Inc.

June 2025

Volume 56 Issue 6

Thoughts From the President

By Chuck Lind MMR

The May meeting at our new location was well attended along with the pre-meeting dinner at the Whataburger that we sort of took over. Bob Barnett has several good programs lined up for this year, but if you are interested in presenting a clinic or furnishing refreshments, please contact him.

Chris Roehl has set up our 3rd Annual Operating Session with SAMRA in San Antonio. It will be Saturday July 12 from 10AM – 4PM. They have a large 4,000 square foot building that features a single track 700' plus main line. It is set in the spring of 1959. SanJac members will pick up the cost of a pizza lunch, so Chris will be collecting \$10.00 as you arrive. For those of us that have operated there before, it is a great running railroad that will keep you busy while enjoying the wildflowers as you travel from San Antonio to Fort Worth. Please contact Chris if you want to attend.

Never too early to start planning for the Fall Layout tour. Time to work on some of the projects that have been sitting on the workbench and start fine tuning the layout so you will be ready in November. Craig will be sending out an email to those who have been on the tour in the past later this year. If you have not been on the tour in the past, please contact him if you want to get on this year's tour.

Look forward to seeing everyone at our June meeting. For those who want to join us for dinner before the meeting, we will be at the Whataburger on Post Oak at Belford.

Thanks,

Chuck

The San Jac Jamboree

To those fairly new to the hobby or to the Houston Area the term “Jamboree” may seem a bit out of place when applied to model railroading. But in the 1970s and 1980s the larger train shows in south Texas were called Jamborees. The first San Jacinto Model Railroad Club Jamboree was held February 20, 1972 at the Airport Inn near Hobby Airport. In the early 2000s the San Jac adopted the term “Train Show”, and to include the participation of LSR Division 8 and the numerous modular clubs who brought layouts, the name became the Greater Houston Train Show. More on the San Jac Jamboree later, but first a side trip west to Austin and San Antonio.

The San Antonio Jamboree: The San Antonio Model Railroad Association (SAMRA) also started holding the San Antonio Jamboree about this time. I have always believed the San Jac Jamboree was the first annual train shows held in Texas but only have written proof of when we started. To those who have visited the SAMRA Club House and seen their excellent library room they may have early records and be able to verify their opening date. For several years the San Antonio venue was the Howard Johnson’s on Old Austin Highway, the same location where SAMRA hosted several LSR Conventions. The location was moved to the Live Oak Convention Center for many years. When that center was closed SAMRA was forced to find a suitable new location.

The Austin Jamboree: A few years later the Model Railroaders of Austin began the Annual Austin Jamboree, typically held the last weekend in October. The clubs in South Texas tried hard to maintain an LSR Convention format and not just host a train show. The first Austin Jamboree I attended in 1981 had clinics, a model contest, sales tables (called a flea market in those days), and actually had a silent auction. With changes at that venue the Austin Jamboree disappeared for a time and has been resurrected as the Austin Train Show at a much larger public venue in recent years.

San Jacinto Model Railroad Club Jamboree: The name appears to have changed between the 2000 and 2001 shows. References appear to the “Jamboree” in 2000 and the show was called the Greater Houston Train Show in 2001. From 1999 to 2002 the show was held on Saturday and Sunday. The cost of the extra day rental was not offset by additional Sunday attendance. The San Jac’s labor force was also not large enough to cover both days.

Below is shown a summary of the train show dates, locations and general chairman. Much more detailed information exists for several of the show years including the display club layouts, clinicians, chairs for each task and for some years, attendance, cost and profit. Perhaps another time I will show one or two example years.

San Jacinto Model Railroad Club Jamborees and Train Shows

YEAR	DATE	CHAIRMAN	LOCATION
1972	February 20, 1972	Ed Quin	Airport Inn
1973	February 24, 1973	Ed Quin	Airport Inn
1974	February 25, 1974	Ed Quin	Airport Inn
1975	<i>LSR Convention - No Jamboree Held</i>		

1976	February 28, 1976	Julius Lang	Albert Pick Motor Inn
1977	February 26, 1977	Ed Quin	Albert Pick Motor Inn
1978	February 25, 1978	Ben Pearlman	Albert Pick Motor Inn
1979	February 3, 1979	Greg Johnson	Dumffries Royal Coach
1980	<i>LSR Convention - No Jamboree Held</i>		
1981	November 21, 1981	Greg Johnson	Astro Village Hotel
1982	<i>No Jamboree - Held Rotating Date Back to Spring</i>		
1983	February 12, 1983	Cecil Stewart	Astro Village Hotel
1984	<i>LSR Convention - No Jamboree Held</i>		
1985	May 11, 1985	Gene Ritter	Astro Village Hotel
1986	March 22, 1986	Cecil Stewart	Astro Dome Marriot
1987	March 14, 1987	Cecil Stewart	Astro Dome Marriot
1988	February 27, 1988	LeRoy King	Corpus Christi School
1989	<i>NMRA National Convention - No Jamboree Held</i>		
1990	March 3, 1990	David Poscovsky	Corpus Christi School
1991	February 23, 1991	Bob Barnett	Corpus Christi School
1992	March 14, 1992	Norman Beveridge	Corpus Christi School
1993	March 20, 1993	Norman Beveridge	Corpus Christi School
1994	March 19, 1994	Norman Beveridge	Corpus Christi School

The History of the World—Part 4

By Bob Barnett MMR

1995	March 18, 1995	Norman Beveridge	Corpus Christi School
Note:	<i>For three years the show was co-chaired by Norman, Cecil Stewart, and Randall Wilson</i>		
1996	March 16, 1996	Mike Cohn	Corpus Christi School
1997	April 15, 1997	Mike Cohn	Humble Civic Center
1998	March 28, 1998	Mike Cohn	Humble Civic Center
1999	February 20-21, 1999	Dale Farney	Humble Civic Center
2000	April 8-9, 2000	Cecil Stewart	Humble Civic Center
2001	April 20-21, 2001	Cecil Stewart	Humble Civic Center
2002	April 13-14, 2002	Cecil Stewart	Humble Civic Center
2003	March 8, 2003	Mike Brignac	Humble Civic Center
2004	March 20, 2004	Rich Businger Rusty McGlaughlin	Humble Civic Center
2005	March 19, 2005	Rich Businger	Stafford Centre
2006	February 11, 2006	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
2007	February 10, 2007	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
2008	February 16, 2008	Carlos Garcia	Stafford Centre
2009	February 21, 2009	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
2010	February 20, 2010	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
2011	February 19, 2011	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
2012	February 18, 2012	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
2013	February 16, 2013	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre

The History of the World—Part 4

By Bob Barnett MMR

2014	February 22, 2014	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
2015	February 21, 2015	Bob Barnett	Stafford Centre
2016	<i>February 20, 2016</i>	Steve Sandifer	Stafford Centre
2017	<i>February 17, 2017</i>	Steve Sandifer	Stafford Centre
2018	<i>February 16, 2018</i>	Steve Sandifer	Stafford Centre
2019	<i>February 15, 2019</i>	Steve Sandifer	Stafford Centre
2020	February 15, 2020	Steve Sandifer	Stafford Centre
2021	<i>August 1, 2021</i>	Steve Sandifer	Stafford Centre
2022	<i>February 19, 2022</i>	Steve Sandifer	Pasadena Conv. Center
2023	<i>February 18, 2023</i>	Steve Sandifer	Pasadena Conv. Center
2024	<i>February 17, 2024</i>	Steve Sandifer	Pasadena Conv. Center
2025	February 15, 2025	Steve Sandifer	Pasadena Conv. Center

Note: *Dates shown in italics are the traditional dates but were not verified by handouts or advertising fliers.*

NMRA National Convention— Save the Date!



July 14-19, 2025

The **NCR and SE Michigan** will be your host for the 2025 NMRA National Convention! This will be like no other convention you have ever attended!

Convention Highlights –

- ✓ One low price for everyone! includes layout tours & OPS!
 - ✓ 90+ clinics - 65+ layout tours - 30+ OPS sessions
 - ✓ 2 day National Train Show - 5 day Yard Sale Room
 - ✓ RPM modeling displays - Full NMRA modeling Contest
 - ✓ People Choice Voting w/awards - Saturday night banquet
-and MUCH MORE!!**

<https://nmra2025.com/>



If you are building a model, at some point you will need to cut something. We hobbyists have many tools to choose from. But the most common tool we all have is an XACTO® knife, or equivalent. I would bet most of us have more than one!

The Handles:

The most common configuration is the pencil thin No. 1 handle. When fitted with a No. 11 blade, it is used for general cutting and slicing needed in model building. For heavier jobs, the No. 2 handle can be fitted with a No. 2 blade (the larger version of a No. 11.) It will also hold a larger chisel blade. I keep an old version for scraping scenery and such.

The granddaddy of blade handles is the No 5. It can be fitted with the larger blades used with the No. 2 handle. But it will also hold some of the company's razor saw blades.

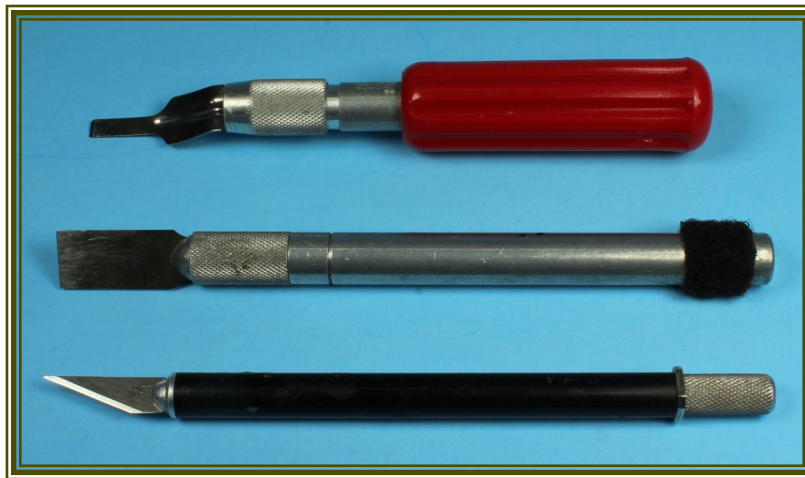


Figure 1 - XACTO knife handles come in 3 common styles. The No 1 with and No 11 blade is shown at the bottom. In the middle is the larger No 2 for bigger jobs. At the top is No 5 that can hold various blades, chisels, and saws.

Blades

The No. 11 blade is the standard knife blade. Make sure you have a good supply of new blades. Using a dull blade will not cut but tear material. Buy them in bulk. I have been known to move a dull blade from my go-to handle to a second one that can be used for ruff work where a sharp blade isn't necessary.



Figure 2 - The No 11 blade is THE blade we all use. I buy them in bulk but move a few to a clear container I keep handy.

Other handy blades to keep on hand are chisel blades that will fit either the No. 1 or the larger handles. I have sharp blades for shaving wood or plastic materials. I also have an old duller blade in an old No. 2 handle used for scenery work.

Let's not discount the value of single edge razor blades. They are very sharp and inexpensive blades to use. I keep one in a cheap window scrapper that serves as a handle.



Figure 3 - Single edge razor blades continue to be a key cutting tool. An inexpensive window scraper provides a safe and effective handle.

I used to throw my used blades into the trash can near my workbench. I found this to be a bit dangerous since I have a habit of reaching into the trash to retrieve something I didn't mean to toss. I used my Dremel tool to cut a slot into the lid of an old mint tin. I cut it big enough for a single edge razor blade too. When the tin is full, I dispose of the batch in the larger can in the garage.



Figure 4 - A slot cut in an old mint tin serves as a container for used blades. I sprayed it gray, so I won't confuse it with my mints!

Saws

Every hobby bench needs at least one good, sharp razor saw. They come in different blade widths and different handle configurations. I bought a 3 pack of XACTO® saws with No. 5 handles years ago. They didn't hold up as well as I hoped so I relegated them to scenery and scraping duties. I purchased a Zona saw that has a solid wood handle. It's important to have one good saw in your toolbox for cutting wood, styrene, and brass.



Figure 5 - Hobby saws shown: A fine-toothed razor saw with a solid wood handle, an old razor saw blade used for scraping texture into wood and styrene, and a jeweler's saw for curved cuts.

Another tool I use is a jeweler's saw. It is great for cutting shapes in wood and styrene. It is also recommended for cutting gaps in Fast Track turnouts. I made a "jeweler's V-slot bench" from a scrap piece of wood. It is great for maneuvering the blade around tricky cuts.



Figure 6 - A piece of scrap wood was fabricated into an effective extension to the workbench and allows me to make intricate cuts with a jeweler's saw.

Cutting materials during model building is an important task. Having the right cutting tool makes the job safer and more effective. I have 8 hobby knives. How many do you have?

Editor's Note: Please see the August 2024 Derail for detailed background on this series.

Published: 1944

In a Locomotive Erecting Shop

In addition to their many roundhouses for making light repairs to locomotives in service, the railroads own and operate hundreds of large shop plants for overhauling, rebuilding, and reconditioning locomotives – commonly called “heavy repairs” or “back shop” work. The roundhouse may be likened to a first aid station, and the repair shop plant (commonly called “railroad shops”) may be likened to a completely equipped hospital for performing major operations.

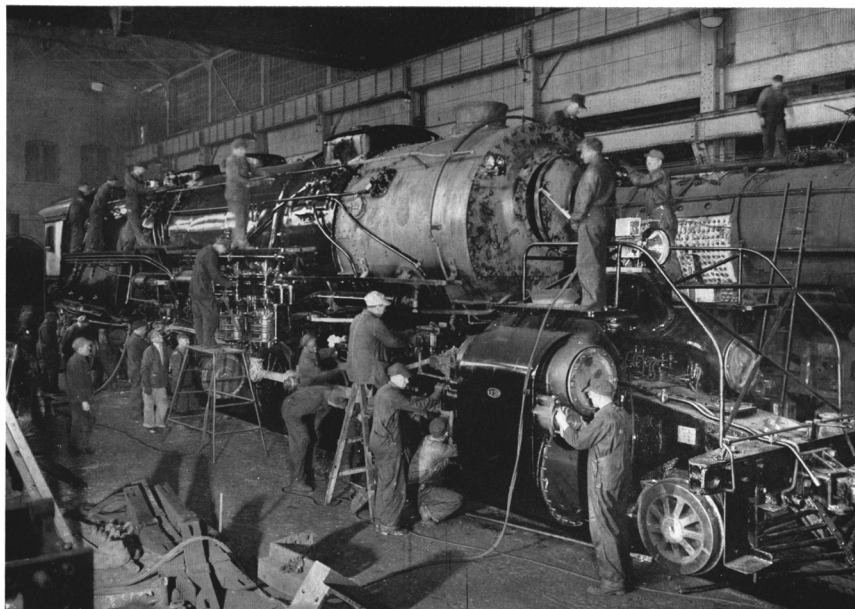
Many large railroad shops are equipped to build, as well as to overhaul and repair, locomotives. However, most locomotives – steam, electric, and diesel-electric – are built for the railroads by manufacturing companies. Each order placed by the railroads for new locomotives is accompanied by detailed specifications and blueprints showing complete information concerning them. The manufacturing company builds the locomotive to the railroad’s specifications.

This also applies to passenger and freight cars. Some railroads are equipped to build their own cars but many of them buy new passenger and freight cars from car-building companies.

Some railroad shops are for overhauling and repairing locomotives only, others rebuild or repair railroad cars only, while many railroad shops are equipped to rebuild and repair both locomotives and cars.

A railroad shop plant usually covers many acres and is made up of many buildings and facilities. A typical fully-equipped shop plant may include a locomotive erecting shop, a machine shop, a blacksmith shop, a power house, a boiler shop, a tank shop, a tool room, a tin, copper, and pipe shop, an oil house, an electric shop, a foundry, a planning mill, a paint shop, a storage room, and storage yards.

Railroad shops which are equipped for building or reconditioning freight and passenger cars as well as locomotives, may also include a wood mill, a wheel shop, and an upholstery shop. Several miles of railway tracks connect and extend through some of these buildings and through storage yards and grounds.



In the Locomotive Erecting Shop

Among the most impressive features of the locomotive erecting shop are the huge overhead electric cranes which move back and forth, above the main floor of the shop, performing prodigious feats of strength. These cranes are capable of picking up and carrying the heaviest locomotives from one end of the shop to the other. The dark object extending across the shop room in the upper left side of the picture is the electric crane.

The work to be done on each locomotive is covered by a shop order. A definite time schedule is worked out, and a requisition is sent to the Purchasing and Stores Department for any materials or parts which will be required to complete the job.

The job of overhauling and repairing the engine may require several weeks. The shop order may call for extensive replacements of worn-out parts such as flues, wheels or tires, and the repair or replacement of valves, brakes, springs, bolts, pipes, and so on. When the job is finished, the locomotive will be painted and put in condition for operation.

Some locomotive shops employ hundreds of workmen, some employ thousands. Railway shop forces include foremen, inspectors, boilermakers and boilermakers' helpers, blacksmiths and blacksmiths' helpers, lathe operators, electric drill operators, riveters, carpenters, painters, engine cleaners, sandpipe men, crane operators, motor-truck and tractor operators, laborers, watchmen, and many other workers, skilled and unskilled.

Approximately one out of every four persons employed by the American railroads is engaged in keeping locomotives and cars in good condition.

The above picture shows the interior of a locomotive erecting shop. In the foreground, workmen are engaged in reconditioning a large locomotive. The engine has been dismantled and given a complete overhauling: many old parts have been replaced with new ones, and the men are now seen putting the finishing touches to the engine before returning it to road service. (This is the same type of locomotive as seen in Picture # 25 from last month) The men in the foreground are working on the locomotive cylinder. The man on the front-end platform is opening or closing the smokebox door. Other workers are touching up paint on new parts on the locomotive.

The Car Inspector at Work



The Car Inspector at Work

The car inspector is one railroad man who is always "looking for trouble". He is also looking for ways to promote safety. His job is to examine the cars to make certain that they are in good condition, or to discover defects which might lead to accidents or delays. He must have sharp eyes, keen ears, and an alert mind as he goes up and down the train tapping wheels and axles and looking for defects.

This picture shows the car inspector examining the journal box to see if it is properly packed with oiled cotton waste. A journal box which is not adequately packed and oiled is likely to become overheated from friction, and this may make it necessary for the train to stop until it cools off.

Incoming passenger and freight trains at important stations and yards are examined carefully. Under, around, inside, and on top of the cars, the inspector clambers, his expert eye searching trucks, gears and other parts for signs of defects. Inside the cars, he notes the condition of roofs, walls, floors and doors. He reads the "air date" to see if the air-brake apparatus has been cleaned within the year. Tests are made before each train leaves its home terminal and when cars are added to or taken out of the train to see that the air-brake system is functioning properly.

At almost any hour one or more car inspectors may be seen about the station and yards of important terminals, carrying their kits of tools, and their lanterns at night, testing brakes and hose connections, examining journal boxes or listening for flaws as they tap their hammers against wheels, pipes, and couplings. Cars which do not meet the severest service requirements are ordered out of the train for repairs. Every effort is made, however, to keep loaded freight cars moving and to avoid delays which might damage the contents of the cars or cause inconvenience to the consignees. Of course, many cars travel empty on their way to pick up loads. Such cars can usually be sent to the repair tracks without undue inconvenience.

Car inspection is a part of the daily routine of railroad operations. It is one of many precautionary measures which the railroads employ to promote safety, prevent delays, and increase the efficiency of passenger and freight train operations. For many years "Safety First" has been the watchword of every railroad and every railroad employee. And today the railroads are providing the American people with their safest form of transportation.

Freight car repairs fall into three classes (1) tinker repairs, (2) light repairs, and (3) heavy repairs. Tinker repairs are inconsequential repairs from the standpoint of expense and are usually made in the railroad yards without interfering with the service of the car. Light repairs consist of running repairs necessary to keep the car in service without material delay. They are usually made in the car repair yard. Heavy repairs consist of rather extensive overhauling and may include the renewal of one or more of the following: wheels, truck bolsters, flooring, sidings, roof, springs, air-brake equipment, couplings or draft beams.

Passenger car repairs are classed as (1) running repairs and 2) general repairs. Running repairs consist of minor work required to keep the car in service without material delay. General repairs call for more extensive work which may include renewal of wheels, air-brake equipment, seats or upholstery, springs, axles, or interior furnishings.

Nearly every freight and passenger terminal has a repair yard for performing light or running repairs. Heavy or general repair work is performed at the larger car shops.

The railroads rely upon the expert eye or ear of the car inspector to locate defective equipment. When he finds anything wrong, he promptly notifies the foreman in charge of car repairs, and the latter takes immediate steps to have the repairs made. In this way, the railroads' great fleet of passenger, freight, express and mail cars is kept in good condition.

Among the workmen who are employed in keeping railway cars in good condition are: car foreman, car repairers, machinists, machinists' helpers, welders, riveters, blacksmiths, blacksmiths' helpers, carpenters, carpenters' helpers, metal workers, machine operators and painters. In addition to those mentioned above, electricians, upholsterers, and plumbers are employed in the rebuilding and repair of passenger train cars.

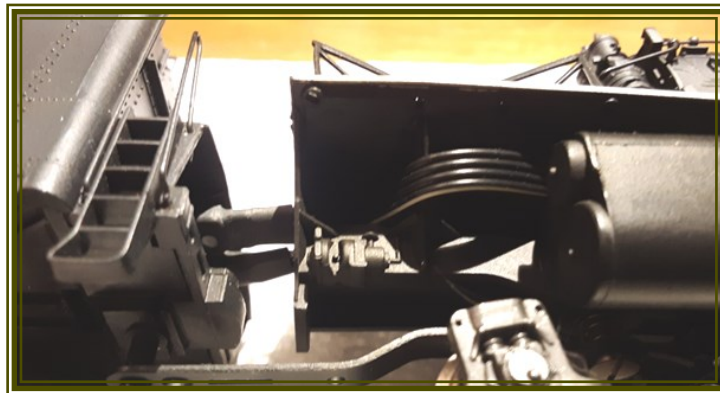
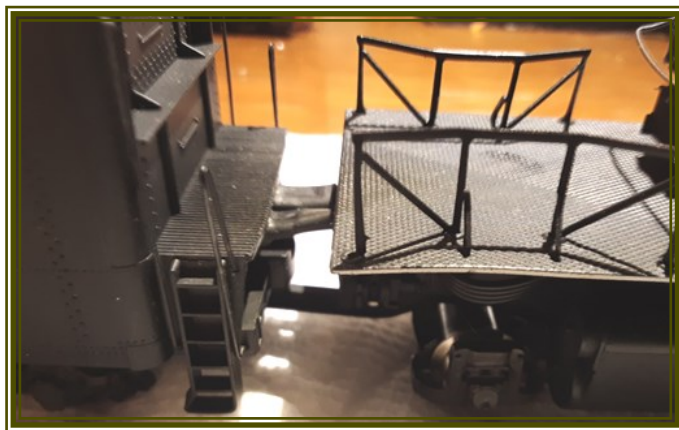
Mark's Minute

By Mark Couvillion

Standardize Wiring When Installing Decoders in Steam Engines

When installing decoders in steam engines, I have a standard harness assembly that I use. Most steam engines have little room for decoders and wiring inside the engine itself but have ample room available in the tender. It is much easier to install a decoder in the tender and run wires in a harness to the engine than to fit it all in the engine. I use two Miniaturics 4-Pin Micro-Mini Connectors (Model 50-004-01) to connect a common 9-pin decoder harness in the tender to 8 wires running into the engine. Male pins are from the engine, the female connectors are on the tender. The right-side harness has the two outside wires for the rail pickup and the two inside wires for the motor leads. The left-side harness has the white-traced lead for the white wire for the front headlight, the second wire is for green, the third wire is for brown, and the outside black wire is for the blue + common. In steam engines, I use the green and brown wires for firebox flicker, one with a red LED and the other with a yellow or orange LED. The flickers are set on opposite outputs (one on "A", the other on "B") to give more randomness to the flickering. The backup light on the tender is hooked up internally to the yellow of the decoder harness and I often add power pickup, preferably to both rails, from the tender. The initial installation is often a simple motor decoder but can easily be upgraded to a sound decoder and makes installation simple. Tenders are so easy to crack open!

An advantage to standardizing the harness installation is that I could change tenders from various engines readily – just for fun. The wiring harnesses can be made to resemble service lines from the tender to engine. I have installed them on cab forwards and they just disappear between the engine and tender! It is hard to imagine that there are 8 conductors between the engine and tender!



Next Month: Setting Minimum DDE Settings



Happy June Birthdays!



Geoff Hogno

with wife, Divina,
in Brugge, Belgium

Al Partlow

(June 1) Al standing in front of his Houston Passenger
Station with a mural of Downtown Houston, circa
1950, in the background



Steve Sandifer MMR

(June 13)

Anne Sandhaas

(June 7) wife of Bob Sandhaas

Diane Wilson

(June 22)

wife of Randall Wilson





Happy Anniversary!



Don and Bettye Bozman

will celebrate their 64th wedding anniversary on June 2. The picture was taken in 2018 when Toro, the Houston Texans' football mascot (plus a couple of the team's cheerleaders) joined in celebrating the layout that Don designed and built for the sick and injured kids at Texas Children's Hospital. The 12'X28' layout still exists today.

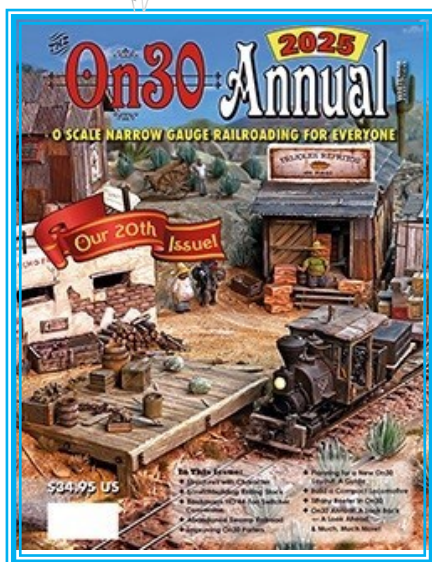


Diane and Randall Wilson

will celebrate their 44th anniversary on June 14. Photo taken in the dome car of the Arkansas and Missouri Railroad.



Congratulations!



Pete Leach MMR

Pete wrote the article "A Freelanced Center Cab Switcher" and was selected for inclusion in the On30 Annual 2025 publication.

Bob Sandhaas

Bob recently retired!!!
More railroading ahead.



NOTE: To share your celebrations (birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, retirements etc.) with your San Jac family, please email d.gatohogno@gmail.com before the 9th of the month to be included in the next Derail edition.

Cash Flow - April

Category

OUTFLOWS

Memorials Mark A Smith	100.00
CD Interest	-47.80
Software Directory	99.80
Train Show Expense	
GHTS Module Honorariums	1,500.00
TOTAL Train Show Expense	1,500.00
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	1,652.00

OVERALL TOTAL	-1,652.00
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Account Balances - As of 3/31/2025

Account	3/31/2025 Balance
Bank Accounts	
BUSINESSSELECT CHKG XX1417	13,109.19
Frost CD	5,316.17
TOTAL Bank Accounts	18,425.36
OVERALL TOTAL	18,425.36

Account Balances - As of 4/30/2025

Account	Balance
Bank Accounts	
Chase Checking	6,409.39
Frost CD	10,363.97
TOTAL Bank Accounts	16,773.36
OVERALL TOTAL	16,773.36

Chuck Lind presented the clinic “What I Learned From the Masters”. This was a presentation on the scenery techniques he has learned throughout the years.

Chuck Lind called the business meeting to order at 8:03.

41 members were present with 9 online. There were no new guests.

Randall Wilson was awarded the AP certification for Master Builder – Cars. He has one more AP to earn before becoming a MMR. His next will be Civil Engineering.

Chris Roehl announced the next SAMRA operating session is July 12. Let Chris know if you are interested in attending. He has 14 signed up so far. There will be pizza for lunch. The layout has a 700 foot single track main line. 3000 square feet. Website is SAMRATX.ORG if you want more information and pictures. The location is technically a museum, so it has artifacts as well.

Phil Stewart:

- LSR clinic is May 10. Kelly Russell is presenting “Switching vs Operating”. He will also explain his car card system.
- The LSR convention is June 26-29 in Baton Rouge. There will be layout tours.
- The National Train Show is July 14-19 in Novi, Michigan. Convention Station #6 (VI) for NOVI.
- Phil is always looking for railroads for people to operate for those who need to get hours for the Chief Dispatcher AP.

Steve Sandifer informed us the model railroading items at the give-away table tonight were from a modeler in Richmond who recently passed away. His wife gave us some of his equipment for distribution. Steve also announced we have a N-scale and a Lionel layout to give away.

Randall Wilson reminded us to carry San Jacinto Club business cards and give them away freely. They help promote the club and having an official card presents us as a formal organization.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13. Next meeting at same location.





San Jac RR Club Meetings take place the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm

Now In-Person and ONLINE

Southwest Central Church of Christ
4011 W. Bellfort, Houston, TX 77025

Visitors are always welcome!



Officers

President: Chuck Lind MMR

president@sanjacmodeltrains.org

Vice President: Bob Barnett MMR

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dbpaul32@yahoo.com

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bsabol@stillmeadow.com

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Gene Mangum (semangum@windstream.net)

Kelly Russell MMR (krussl@yahoo.com)

www.sanjacmodeltrains.org

Webmaster: Brian Jansky

Next Meeting

TUESDAY, JUNE 3RD

AT 7:00PM

HYBRID MEETING: ONLINE AND IN-PERSON

‘THE UNIFIED SIGNAL’ FOR STREET RAILROADS

PRESENTED BY KEN LUEBECK



Refreshments:

Gilbert and Emmie Freitag



Video Corner

SCRATCH BUILDING made easy!
Simple, cheap & unique

