

SPLITSWITCH

Volume 67 Issue 4
www.samratx.org
April, 2009



Home of the San Antonio & Northern Railroad



A Short Blast From The Headend

No Blast received, again.

San Antonio
Model Railroad
Association, Inc.

IMPORTANT NOTICE !!

THERE WILL BE NO FUN RUN ON
EASTER SUNDAY, April 12th!!

YAAK from KAAK

Welcome to our new members, Sheila Britt and son Colton. Seems that Shiela has already been given an extra name, "PTT"-the personal tree twister, and has already graduated to tree builder. Welcome aboard!

The layout for our Balcones Heights Summer Show, July 25-26, 2009 is being transferred to their "Visitors Center" and the 4'x 4' Winter scene will be brought back to SAMRA for storage.

Raffle Layout News: Gary and Lynn Brown, plus Scott Priegel and Annaliese Alexander are working on the Western Packing Railroad 4'x6' layout for the KLRN June auction and the work is progressing on schedule.

Mary Dodson is starting a new 4' x 4' layout.

Budget news; the 2009-2010 Budget was approved at the March Regular meeting.



Texas Ranger Tidbit: During the Great Southwest Strike against Gould's Texas and Pacific Railway in Fort Worth in 1886, Governor John Ireland sent in the state militia and the Texas Rangers to stop the violence caused by striking railroad workers. Texas Ranger Walter Durbin, answered the call and returned order to Buttermilk Switch in Fort Worth.

Items of Interest:

- Maintenance Crew #4 Work-days
Saturday, April 11th & 25th
- Monday Morning Breakfast Group Meets at 8:00 am every Monday @ Denney's & 281 & Bitters
- Layout Management Committee Monday, April 6th
6:30 pm at the Museum
- Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, April 7th
7:30 pm at the Museum
- General Membership Meeting Friday, April 10th
7:30 pm at the Museum

Inside this issue:

President's Letter, Yaak from Kaak	1
Maintenance Crews Cans, Walking Wounded	2
Monthly Calendar Birthday/Anniversary	3
NMRA / LSR Siding New Members	4
LSR Convention 2010 Meeting Minutes	5
What Ever Happened to the Caboose, Home Layout Tour	6
SAMRA Meeting Minutes	7
SAMRA Clinic Coming Events	8

YAAK CONTINUED

Editor-Frank Houzvicka
Mailing-Jack Morgan
Photos: Frank Houzvicka & Flash Blackman

Donations for March 2009

Troy & Carol Robin	Box of small structures	John Forist	MP #1545-HO-15DC
Don Scott	Case of 24 RC		Loco, MP #845-HO-
Ralph Alexander	Montage of SAMRA		15DC Loco, Santa Fe
	History for show		F-3A#192
Ron Nagel	Wood Bit	Paul Dawson	Cookies for Feb. and
Park Lawrence	T&P Caboose #2525		March . Thanks !
Al Boos	Spent \$9.72 for new	Jim Connor	\$3.00 Grass Fund
	tank outflow valve,	Jim Atterberry	HO Cork & Track
	Stand pipe,tank and	Paul Steves	`Homo Bed
	bolts for men's	Flash Blackman	Lifelike Proto 2000 SD 7
	Restroom		#5317, Atlas -Kato-RSD
Robert Taylor	Rivarossi SP 4-8-8-2		5 Sp 5503, Atlas-Kato-
	AC-II Cab Forward	Gary Brown	RSD 5 SP #2436
	RGW 4-6-6-4 Chal		3-DVDs on trains
	lenger		3 stock pens, cows,
	UP 4-8-4 FEF 3 "8444"		plow, seed planter &
	Box cars, asst. frames		farm people
	& HSST cars		
Craig Pauling	Large box of HO cars,	If I have not listed an item that you have do-	
	engine, track &	nated, please let me know so I can put it in	
	Power packs	the next Issue of the SAMRA Split Switch !	

Maintenance Team # 4

John Lowrance	822*2628
John Barteau	830-249-2936
Bill Bonenberger	521-1338
Brian & Peggy Carrico	535-1070
Lee Cook	830-438-6480
Tom Crosthwait	647-3261
Paul Dawson	311-0848
Jeff Donahue	699-8121
Bruce Grant	658-4364
Donald Hoisek	512-863-3220
Renee & Nathan Holiner	497-4105
Carl Lehman	333-6079
Vernon Luza	667-1565
Joe Morgan	845-2576
Ron Nagel	651-5188
Dick Schaefer	497-7745
Mark Schroeder	333-1008
Don Scott	651-7540
David Spencer	830-557-5587
Gary Stuebben	667-2014
John Talley	481-1754
Thad Taubert	522-9325
Bryan Weidner	830-935-2517
Bruce Whalen	377-2825
Jerry Williams	281-415-4078

Walking Wounded


Fred Bock underwent eye surgery on Tuesday, March 10 th. Everything went well and he is now recuperating.

Barbara Dickman learned that she can not keep up with kids on skates and is recuperating from a broken wrist.


CHANGES IN CONTACT INFORMATION

If you change an address, e-mail, phone #, etc., please let us know.

If you don't tell us, we don't know!



"CANS"



Remember to bring your empty aluminum cans to SAMRA for recycling. The money made from recycling cans goes into the general fund to help pay for the needs of the club. This is an easy way to put some extra money into the treasury without digging into your pockets.

PLEASE HELP!



NMRA / LSR SIDING



OK . . . what else is available from the NMRA for the non-NMRA member model railroader? The NMRA Standards and Recommended Practices (RPs) used to be available only to NMRA members. New members received a huge loose-leave binder, about 2" thick, with hardcopies of each of the numerous Standards and RPs.

But, thanks to the Internet, today you don't need to be an NMRA member to use them. If you want to see them, they're available for anyone on the NMRA website. Go to: <http://www.nmra.org/standards/standards.html>. (If you're reading this from e-mail or the SAMRA website, just "click" and go). From the NMRA perspective, "Standards" are the minimum mandatory dimensions necessary to promote interoperability of track, locomotives, and rolling stock. "Recommended Practices" are just that: recommendations that enhance the probable reliability and enjoyment of activities in the hobby.

What other non-member benefits of the NMRA are there?

In February I needed to get a copy of an article on scratchbuilding searchlight signals with bi-color LEDs that appeared in the late 70s in Railroad Model Craftsman. I sent an e-mail to the Kalmbach Memorial Library (KML) at NMRA headquarters asking for a copy. Four (4) days later, I received a Xerox copy in the mail. Cost to me: \$2 including postage. For non-members, the cost would have been slightly higher. They did all the researching, copying, and mailing.

A SAMRA member could have gone to the extensive collection of Model Railroader magazine in the SAMRA Library. But the SAMRA collection doesn't include extensive files on other magazines, like *Railroad Model Craftsman*, *Narrow Gauge* and *Short Line Gazette*, or even out of publication magazines like "Model Trains", "The Scale Coupler", or *Mainline Modeler*.

The Kalmbach Memorial Library does. . . and the computerized indexes for all of them as well. And for minimal cost, you can make use of their collection. For more information on the KML, "click" to: <http://library.nmra.org/>.

Fred

Fred Bock, MMR
Director, Division 6 (South Texas), Lone Star Region, NMRA

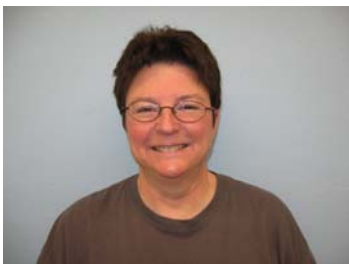


New Members

No new members this month.

Photos of last months members

Sheila Britt



Richard "Colton" Britt



April Ops Sessions

Saturday, 4/11/09 @ 1:00 to 4:00 PM

Saturday, 4/18/09 @ 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Friday Morning Ops Session, 4/24/09 @ 8:00 Denny's and 9:00 SAMRA.

All operating skill level positions are open. Come and join us!

Fun Run Session:

Every Thursday Evening @ 6:30 PM til 8:PM. This is your chance to bring your own cars and locos and run freelance over the entire railroad.

The Ops Group





2010 Lone Star Region Convention

Meeting called to order by Chairman Paul Steves at 10:00 AM

Attendees: Paul Steves, Al Boos, Don Scott, John Lowrance, Dennis Pierce, Fred Bock, Ralph Alexander, Mark Schroeder, Ron Nagel, Ernie Kaak, Flash Blackman, Orphie Neathery, Tom Crosthwait

Paul Steves/Al Boos Report:

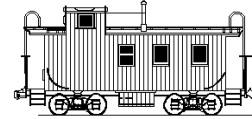
1. The Hotel choice is the Doubletree, McCullough @ Loop 410. This is the same hotel we used for the '06 Convention.
2. The food and beverage guarantee is \$10,000 to pay for the break out rooms for clinics, contests, etc.
3. Al Boos estimates 230 for the banquet @ \$33 .00 for a total of \$7590. This includes a 21% gratuity. The breakfast attendance is estimated to be 210 @ \$16.00 for a total of \$3360.00 This brings the meal guarantee to \$10950. This compares with cost of \$6474 and \$2978.04 for a total of \$9452.04 for the '06 meals.
4. Hotel wants a signed contract by 1 April 09 and a deposit of \$500.00 is required
5. Al Boos is to revisit the Hotel for final changes and questions about contract.
6. Fred Bock was asked to check on LSR Projectors available.
7. John Lowrance brought up availability of A-V equipment for clinicians.
8. Paul Steves discussed a special Thurs. night event and TTM was discussed as a possibility.
9. Ralph Alexander suggested we buy "Alamo Rails" web site on .com and .org for two years. Ralph volunteered to set up the web site. His goal is to have the sites up by May 09.
10. John Lowrance asked about budget for "National Speaker/Clinician". It was discussed that the '06 LSR convention paid for Mark Greenberg's Air Fare before he cancelled due to health reasons.
11. Mark Schroeder agreed to handle the contest as he did for the '06 convention.
12. It was suggested that David Spencer handle the operating sessions. Paul/Don will contact David.
13. Ron Nagel volunteered to handle the Layout Tours.
14. It was suggested by Paul Steves that Gary Brown be contacted to handle the Prototype tours. Paul will contact Gary. In addition to a UP rail tour of some sort, tours of the Hansen Quarry in Garden Ridge and Toyota Motors Truck Plant were suggested. Since 3 members live in Garden Ridge, we will contact Hansen for tour information. Al Boos also suggested the Steel Mill in Seguin which was one of the suggested tours for '06.
15. Publicity Chairman goes unfilled. Everybody agrees this is a critical appointment.
16. Don Scott agreed to handle the Registration.
17. Ernie Kaak agreed to handle the Finance/Treasurer responsibilities.
18. It was reported that Charlie and Dawn Spangler will not repeat as Auction Chairmen so this position remains open.
19. Key positions that remain open include: Publicity, Printing, Silent Auction, Timetable, Non Rail Tours, Non Rail Clinics, Arts and crafts contest and awards, Company Store, Awards and Trophies, Decorations and Centerpieces, Videos, Convention Photographer, Security, Hotel and Banquet coordinator, Sponsors/Door Prizes.
20. Next Meeting Scheduled 4 April 09 at 10AM

Meeting adjourned 11 AM

Don Scot
Registrar

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THE CABOOSE?

BY DAVID SPENCER



The one thing that many people looked forward to while stopped at a railroad crossing was the caboose. Since the days of governmental deregulation, the oncoming of newer technologies and faltering economies, the long history of the caboose has come to an end.

Governmental deregulation changed the railroad industry, marking the beginning of the demise of the caboose. Deregulation and changing of laws was an opportunity for class one railroads to upgrade and streamline their operations, thus changing the way in which they handled freight revenues and labor. Freight charge costs could become more competitive and the number of train personnel could be reduced, thus effecting a railroad's bottom line.

Modern technologies also played its part in the demise of the caboose. The "END OF TRAIN" (EOT) replaced the caboose with a flashing red light. Monitored air temperature, and monitored train brake air pressure information is sent to the head locomotive by way of radio telemetry from the EOT. Dispatchers miles from the train's location handle remote control of track switches. This eliminates the need for the railroad to have a crew riding in a caboose to get out and manually operate the track switches. Also, detection of heat and smoke from a failed freight car axle bearing is possible by a device called a "HOT BOX" detector. Once the detector spots a bad or failing axle bearing, the detector sends a radio message to the train crew in the engine advising them to stop the train. These advances in technology eliminate the need for train personnel at the end of a train. Thus, eliminating the need for a caboose.

Faltering economics played another part in the caboose demise. With class one railroads looking to streamline their operations and save money, train personnel were cut from five to two. The one or two brakemen, etc. in the caboose were eliminated. This was the final blow for the ill fated, much loved railroad car. Competition from highway traffic and shortline railroads with less overhead forced class one railroads to find ways to improve their bottom line.

Fortunately for the caboose, there are groups of people who will never let this piece of American history die. Model railroaders, clubs, railroad historical societies and some museums collect, model, refurbish and show originals or miniature replicas for later generations to learn about, see and enjoy. A ghost of the past. The last car on the train. The CABOOSE.....

HOME LAYOUT TOUR

This months Home Layout Tour will be at the home of Troy and Carol Robin. It has been another year since they last opened their layout. It will be interesting to see what changes and/or additions have been made.

Open:

April 11th from 3 pm to 7 pm
April 18th and 19th from 3 pm to 7pm
April 25th and 26th from 3 pm to 7 pm

Layout Gauge: HO

Layout Street Address:

294 Leisure Village Lane
New Braunfels, TX 78130
830-624-2651

Driving Directions from SAMRA

1. Start at **7702 Narrow Pass St. Live Oak on Narrow Pass Dr.** going toward **White Sands St, Champion Oak** – go **0.1** mi
2. Turn R on **Topperwein Rd** – go **1.2** mi.
3. Turn R on **N I-35** – go **0.1** mi.
4. Take L ramp onto **I-35 North** – go **16.5** mi.
5. Take exit **#187** onto **S I-35** toward **Lake McQueeney/Seguin Ave** – go **0.8** mi.
6. Turn R on **S Seguin Ave [FM-725]** – go **1.2** mi.
7. Continue to follow **FM-275** – go **2.8** mi.
8. Turn R on **Leisure Village Dr.** – go **0.4** mi. Arrive at **294 Leisure Village Dr., New Braunfels**, on the L



SAMRA General Membership Meeting, March 13th, 2009

President Nagel called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

The Treasurer's Report was read and approved.



There were no new members to announce.

R. Alexander reported on preparations for the upcoming Summer show. Vendor letters will be mailed out in April.

J. Lowrance reported on LMC status noting that next year's goals have been established. These goals are focused on preparations for operating sessions, specifically in support of the upcoming LSR convention. These goals include establishing telephone communications, setting up a dispatcher's panel, constructing control panels, completing wiring projects, and providing some basic signaling support. Volunteers were sought to support these projects.

P. Steves asked for additional volunteers for the LSR convention. Hotel reservations are being arranged. Future meeting notices will be sent to the general membership.

P. Mackin announced the intention to hold the next boy scouting railroading merit badge clinic in May. The specific date will be determined after examining schedules of participants.

C. Booth discussed the upcoming election. All officers except two at-large BOD members will be elected. The election will be conducted at the May general membership meeting. Anyone interested in any of these officer positions should contact Chuck.

President Nagel reported that the charter for the SAMRA Modular Group as a SAMRA special interest group was approved.

W. Hammelman discussed the proposed budget. The budget proposal includes paying off the smaller loan which was taken to support installation of the air conditioners. After discussion, a motion was made and passed to approve the budget.

C. Robin noted that the home layout tours will be restarted beginning with the Robin's residence in April. Members are encouraged to open their home layouts for tours.

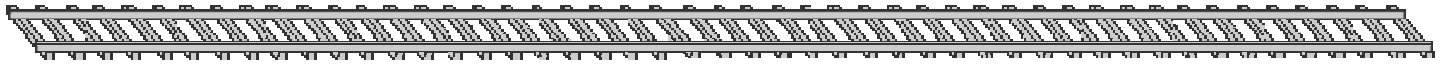
F. Houzvicka provided the status of SANTRAK activities including an open house on 3/15/2009, followed shortly by a move to a much larger facility. A modular layout show is being scheduled for the last week in April. The SANTRAK modules are open on Saturdays and Sundays. Additional details will be in the Split Switch.

W. Hammelman asked for ideas for future clinics. Suggested topics included preparation and use of decals.

After the meeting, operations and a clinic on Rail Op were held.

President Nagel adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.





Home of the San Antonio & Northern Railroad

SAMRA Clinics

The March clinic was conducted by Don Scott, Paul Steves, and Dave Spencer. The subject was Rail Ops and how it applies to a SA&N operating session. The club is trying to get ready for the 2010 LSR Convention so these skills will be necessary.

Future Clinics

Wayne needs your input on what clinics to offer and people to run the clinic!

Have an idea for a future clinic? See Wayne Hammelman!

The Splitswitch
San Antonio Model Railroad Association, Inc.
7702 Narrow Pass St.
Live Oak, TX 78233 - 2947
www.samratx.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Flatonia Pavilion Party
Saturday, 4 April, 2009
10:00 AM till whenever
Flatonia Pavilion
Flatonia, Texas

SANTRAK Modular Railroad Festival
Saturday, April 25—10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Sunday, April 26—10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
3455 Steen Street
San Antonio, TX
AT&T Center Exit off 35 west of Grady's

