

# SPLITSWITCH

Volume 67 Issue 12

[www.samratx.org](http://www.samratx.org)

December, 2009



Home of the San Antonio & Northern Railroad

## A Short Blast From The Headend



Congratulations are in order to the general membership of SAMRA, because this month, the *Cowcatcher Round Up* announced its first annual 2009 Gold Rail Awards, recognizing the best of model railroading and rail enthusiasm in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana. SAMRA was nominated in two of the twelve categories. The **SAMRA San Antonio & Northern** has been nominated for **Best Club Layout, Permanent**, and the **SAMRA Jamboree Model Train Show** has been nominated for **Best Train Show**. You may see a complete list of categories and nominees at the *Cowcatcher's* website, [www.cowcatcherroundup.com](http://www.cowcatcherroundup.com). As I understand it the winners are decided by popular vote, so make sure you vote. The *Cowcatcher Roundup* is a free publication that can be found at hobby shops. There are usually several copies in the SAMRA museum library. Neither of these items, the Jamboree or the SAMRA Layout, can be successful without your participation. We still need a lot of help with the upcoming Jamboree and the building of the layout.

**San Antonio Model Railroad Association, Inc.**

### Items of Interest:

- Maintenance Crew #4 Workday Saturday, Dec 12th & 26th.
- Monday Morning Breakfast Group Meets at 8:00 am every Monday @ Denney's & 281 & Bitters
- Layout Management Committee will meet at 7:00 Dec 7th.
- Board of Directors Meeting will meet at 7:30 Dec 8th.
- **General Membership Meeting WILL be held Saturday, December 12th at 7:30 pm in the Museum following the party at Checkers Resteraunt.**
- LSR Planning meeting will be Tuesday, Dec 29th at 7:00 in the Museum.



## CHRISTMAS PARTY



Don't forget the SAMRA Christmas party, Saturday evening, 12 December, at Checkers Restaurant. This is a family affair with a chance for the wives to meet each other and see what their spouse actually does during those visits to SAMRA. We start arriving at Checkers Restaurant about 6pm. By 7:30 we plan to have eaten and be at the museum for ooie-gooies and hopefully some entertainment by the SAMRA band. Please bring your favorite dessert to share. There will be a rail and non-rail gift exchange by drawing. Gifts should be wrapped and not be over \$20 in value. I sincerely hope to see everyone at Checkers on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

Finally in case you can't make the party, Brenda and I want to wish every one of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Ron Nagel

### Inside this issue:

President's Letter,	1
Maintenance Crews, Cans, New Members	2
Monthly Calendar Birthday/Anniversary	3
BSA Merit Badge, Christmas Party, Home Layout Tour	4
Yaak from Kaak, Christmas Party	5
NMRA/LSR Siding,	6
SAMRA Meeting Minutes,	7
SAMRA Clinic Coming Events	8

**NEW MEMBER(S)**

**Damian Stewart**

Spouse: -  
Years in Hobby: 2  
Layout: Yes.  
Scale: N & HO

**Greg Wilchek**

Spouse: -Cey  
Years in Hobby: 1  
Layout: Yes. 4x8  
Scale: HO

**Phil Rawlins**

Spouse: -  
Years in Hobby: 55  
Layout: Yes. 26x2x10x5  
Scale: HO



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

**Maintenance Team # 4**

<b>JOHN LOWRANCE</b>	<b>822-2628</b>
RODNEY APGAR	651-3156
JOHN BARTEAU	830-249-2936
WILLIAN BONENBERGER	521-1338
BRIAN & PEGGY CARRICO	535-1070
LEE COOK	830-438-6480
TOM CROSTHWAIT	647-3261
PAUL DAWSON	313-0848
JEFFREY DONAHUE	269-0135
GEORGE GAUGER	497-4406
BRUCE GRANT	658-4364
RENEE & NATHAN HOLINER	497-4105
FRANK JASKINIA	967-6437
CARL LEHMAN	333-6079
VERNON LUZA	667-1565
GARY RAFFAELE	541-9317
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
BRUCE WHALEN	377-2825
JERRY WILLIAMS	

**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!**



## SAMRA Holds Seventh Railroading Merit Badge Clinic

Pat Mackin

On Saturday, October 31, SAMRA hosted 28 boy scouts for our seventh Railroading merit badge clinic. The clinic lasted from 9:00 a.m. until noon. This activity is part of our education and public outreach responsibilities under our 501(c)(3) charter.

SAMRA meets a real need with these events, since our museum layout provides an almost ideal facility for learning about railroading. We have instructed approximately 200 scouts since we started the clinics, and the local council of the Boy Scouts of America is greatly appreciative of our efforts.

Instructors for this event were Al Boos, Carl Lehman, Frank Houzvicka, Tom Castanos, and Gary Brown. A number of other SAMRA members were present to support the event.

We continue to receive requests for these clinics, and we have been trying to schedule them once every two or three months. Our main limitation on holding the clinics is availability of members to serve as instructors - I don't want to wear out those who have generously volunteered so far, and Rod Apgar has volunteered to instruct at future clinics. The effort is minimal, and as a model railroader, you already have the knowledge needed to participate. The scouts have a merit badge pamphlet that helps us orient our instruction to the specific needs of the scouting program.

If you would like to participate in this valuable and enjoyable program, just email me or give me a call. The only qualification is that you need to enjoy talking about trains.

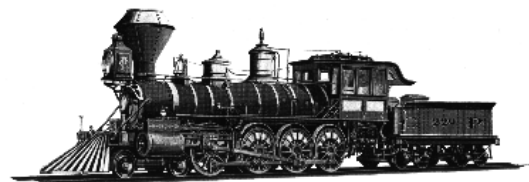
The next clinic will be on Saturday, January 16: two weeks prior to the Jamboree.

## CHRISTMAS PARTY

Mark your calendar for the SAMRA Christmas dinner and party on Saturday, 12 December. SAMRA has reserved a room at Checkers Restaurant, 13835 Nacogdoches. Checkers is an award winning, reasonably priced, restaurant that features everything from hamburgers to steaks, and is located by the HEB, just south of O'Conner Rd. After the meal we will adjourn to the Bob Clark Museum for a gift exchange and ooie-gooies. There will be two gift exchanges, one for the men and one for the ladies. So bring a wrapped gift under \$20 and your favorite dessert to share. See attachments for copy of menu. See you there!

## HOME LAYOUT TOUR

No information on any home layout tours for the Month of November.





## YAAK from KAAK

My Assistant, Jack Siegel, spent a weekend on the Texas State Railroad and has written a great article about his trip--- which I am now including in my Yaak from Kaak.

Weekend on the Texas State Railroad

By  
Jack Siegel

I ventured out of San Antonio, October 23-25, 2009 for a camping trip and a ride on the Texas State Railroad (TSR), a unit of the State Park System. The

Campground is located at Rusk and has a small station, train maintenance area, great facilities, and about 30 campsites in a very nice compound. The main Passenger Terminal, Gift Shop, and some maintenance facilities are located at Palestine (pronounced- "Pal-es-teen), about 20 miles from Rusk. It's a 5-hour trip from San Antonio to Rusk pulling a trailer- remember when campers were people and not vehicles? Anyway, we got up there about 6 PM and got set up very easily-campground is just great! The next morning we got up and headed to Palestine (minus the trailer). We arrived about 10 AM, visited the Gift Shop and walked around the Terminal/water tank area. You get a tour of the 2-8-0 steam engine, one of the two built for the US Army about 1915. After picking up box lunches for the trip, we boarded the train. There are both A/C and open cars depending on how much smoke you want. After a Western style shootout at the station, we departed Palestine about 11 A. M. The East Texas woods were very nice and the weather was really perfect. The TSR crosses the Neches River on a 1200 ft. bridge and there's also another 700 ft. bridge on the route to Rusk, but the highlight of the trip was turning the engines on the 1890's turn table at Maybelle, where you can get out of your car and watch steam from the engine power the compressor/motor used to turn the engine for the return trip. Maybelle is located on Highway 84, so plenty of people were there to watch the action who weren't passengers on the TSR. The return trip was relatively uneventful, except for the Western robbery in the passenger cars- I guess they snuck on back at Palestine! We arrived back at the station at about 1:30, and after another visit to the Gift shop, headed back to Rusk (okay- we visited a few antique shops in Palestine, first). We cooked burgers and the kids made smores that evening. The Campground and park at Rusk was very busy Saturday - it was "Thomas the Train" day,- very popular, hundreds of people. We packed up the trailer Sunday morning and headed for lunch with the in-laws at Jerrell. After a couple of hours of eating, it was back to San Antonio. I highly recommend the TSR- you could do it in a long day and there are motels if you don't want to camp. Reservations for the TSR and info at 1-888-987-2461 or [www.TexasState RR. Com](http://www.TexasStateRR.Com). I made a photoboard you can see at the SAMRA building.

Just a reminder—dues are now due for the year 2010---\$72.00 for members and I would appreciate getting them as soon as possible.





## NMRA / LSR SIDING



### Christmas Wish List for (Novice) Model Railroaders

**One plastic tool box with handle and at least one lift-out tray**

#### Rolling Stock Maintenance Tools:

- 1 or 2 X-acto knives – one for new blade, one for used blade
- Spare #11 X-acto knife blades – 10 or 20-pack plastic box
- Two Small (4") jewelers' screwdrivers, slotted-head and Phillip's head
- Small needle-nosed pliers & /optional/ small wire-cutting pliers
- Needle files, half-round and other assorted /plus/ Emery board
- NMRA Standards Gauge – check wheel gauge, width, flangeways, etc.
- Kadee Coupler Height Gauge – check how high/low car rides above rails
- Two packages Kadee truck washers, 1 ea "red" and "grey" – adjust car heights
- Pin vise (twist-drill) and assorted drill bits – installing new coupler pockets
- Kadee Drill & Tap set for #2-56 screws – installing new coupler pockets
- Package of assorted short 2-56 round-head machine screws – install couplers
- /optional/ X-acto or Zona razor saw(s) with handles
- A small postage scale up to 16 ounces – to check cars for NMRA std weight
- 2 packages of stick-on A-Line lead weights (not steel) – to add weight
- 1 package insulated metal wheelsets, 33" (Kadee, Intermountain, Life-Like)
- 1 package insulated metal wheelsets, 36" – to replace plastic freight car wheels

#### Kadee Coupler Maintenance:

- #20-pair pack of HO #5 or #148 couplers – replace damaged couplers
- Package of spare centering leaf springs (for Kadee #5 couplers)
- Package of spare knuckle springs (for all Kadee couplers)
- Tube of Kadee or other brand powdered graphite – lubricate couplers
- /optional/ Kadee trip-pin pliers – adjust Kadee coupler trip pins

#### Paint & Weathering:

##### **Assorted good-quality paint brushes**

- one very fine tip; - one small pointed tip; - one large pointed tip
- one/two broad-brushes (1/4" to 1/2" inch)
- a used soft make-up brush - for dusting or applying chalks
- 2 cheap brushes (one small pointed, other about 1/2 inch)

##### **Floquil Poly-scale acrylic paints** (or other water-based paints):

(note: acrylic paints are less toxic)

- Grimy Black /and/ - Reefer White
- Caboose Red /or/ SP Scarlet /or/ Signal Red
- Reefer Orange
- UP Armor Yellow
- Coach green /or/ Pullman Green
- A very light crème color – for dust
- Rust //- Roof Brown //- Rail Brown //- Railroad Tie Brown
- Reefer Grey
- Silver /or/ Aluminum
- 3 empty mixing bottles

##### **Weathering Chalks:**

one set of artist's pastel chalks, with earth tones preferred  
/or/ one set of assorted pastel chalks (all colors)

One spray can of Testor's Dullcoat

**Merry Christmas to all!!!** Fred Bock, MMR

## SAMRA General Membership Meeting, November 13th, 2009

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

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved with corrections.

The Treasurer's Report was read and approved.

New members Damian Stewart, Greg Wilchek, and Phil Rawlins were announced. SAMRA now has 113 members.

R. Alexander provided a status of preparations for the Jamboree. He asked for club membership help in contacting vendors who have not yet purchased tables, and he provided lists of about 10 names each for that purpose. Table sales are going well, in general. Ralph also asked each SAMRA member to provide five names to add to the mailing list. A link for this purpose has also been added to the SAMRA website. Finally, Ralph asked for help conducting the various functions required during the Jamboree.

J. Lowrance reported on LMC and layout activities. Crews are working on several projects, and additional participants are always welcome. Plaster, construction, and scenery projects are underway as well as an effort to identify and install an adequate telephone system. Control panels are also being constructed, and switch machines are being installed. Paul Dawson has declared the Brazos area to be "done."

P. Steves provided a status of preparations for the LSR convention. Paul urged non-NMRA members to purchase a six month membership so they can participate in both the LSR convention and the upcoming 75<sup>th</sup> NMRA convention in Milwaukee. A live steam railroad in Wimberly has been added as an extra fare activity for the LSR, and the editor of Scale Rails magazine will speak at the convention. Other details are available on the convention website.

P. Mackin reported on the successful completion of a railroading merit badge clinic on October 31. The next clinic has been scheduled for January 16 from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Lynn Brown reported that books will remain on sale until Wednesday for \$4 each. After Wednesday they will be moved to the company store and will be offered for sale at the Jamboree.

The San Antonio and Northern Accurail cars have arrived and are being sold. The price rises to \$18 per car following tonight's meeting. Forty-eight cars have been sold so far.

The Christmas party will be December 12 at Checkers restaurant. After dinner at Checkers, the party will move to the SAMRA clubhouse where there will be ooey gooey and a gift exchange.

President Nagel reported that, after an examination of budget and finances, the BOD decided not to raise dues for 2010. He added a reminder that a sustaining membership is available for \$108.

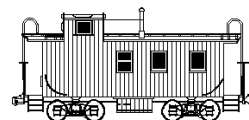
J. Talley reminded the membership of the module group schedule at Quarry Mall and noted that all SAMRA members are welcome to run trains on the modular layout, which has both DC and DCC capability. New members are also needed for this SAMRA special interest group.

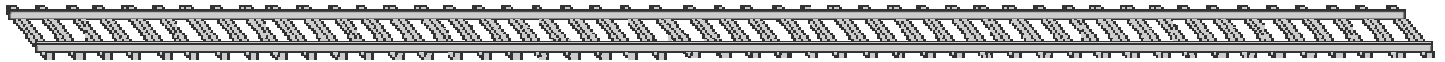
J. Siegel reported on his visit to the Texas State Railroad and campground. A story of his trip will be in the Split Switch.

Bill Eubank conducted a clinic on fence construction after the meeting was adjourned.

President Nagel adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Pat Mackin - Secretary





*Home of the San Antonio & Northern Railroad*

## **SAMRA Clinics**

I heard that there was a clinic on fences given by Bill Eubank. No one sent me any pictures, so I have little information except that it was well received.

If you have any ideas for a clinic or would like to present one please contact Wayne Hammelman.

**The LSR Promo cars are in and they look great!  
Get your's soon!**

The Splitswitch  
San Antonio Model Railroad Association, Inc.  
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FIRST CLASS MAIL



Oklahoma City Train Show &  
15th Annual Southern Plains  
N Scale Convention  
Oklahoma State Fairgrounds  
Transportation Bldg.  
Thursday, Dec 3rd through  
Sunday, Dec 6th, 2009

North Texas Council of  
Railroad Clubs  
Dallas Area Train Show  
Plano Centre  
2000 East Spring Creek Pkwy  
Saturday, Jan 16th, 10-5  
Sunday, Jan 17th, 10-4

