



Western Division

Train Collectors Association

Newsletter



Volume 51, No. 1

January, 2005

Meet Notice

Our next meet will take place on Saturday, January 22nd in the Arcadia Senior Center, located at 405 S. Santa Anita Avenue in Arcadia, CA. Sellers: *Tables are free!*

To get to the meeting, exit the 210 Freeway at Santa Anita Ave. Drive south about half a mile and turn right into the parking lot. We're located next to the lawn bowling area. Look for the sign. Doors open at 10 a.m. for trading and selling. Please check our newly updated website, at <http://www.tcawestern.org>, for more information and a detailed map!

Our display theme for January will be to bring anything that has a connection with "The New Year". Show off that rare and prized toy train and facilitate the transfer of knowledge on collecting toy trains. There will be a prize presented for the most interesting item displayed!

President's Message

By Wayne Sheriff, President, TCA Western Division



It is time to say a big **THANK YOU** to Bob Caplan and the Board of Directors for a great 2004 which included the 50th Anniversary Celebration. Thanks for a job well done. This coming year, we need to further extend our visibility as a club by participating in more train shows and the public venues. The Officers and

Board of Directors will be meeting to address this and other actions for the coming year.

As is the custom, the election results were announced at the December Meet. The Western Division officers for 2005 are Wayne Sheriff, President; Jon Lang, Vice-President; Harold Shapiro, Membership Secretary/Treasurer; Bob Lemberger, Recording Secretary; and Robert Caplan, Past President. The Directors are: John Parker, Jim Kenney, C. Ray Sugg, Jerry Johnson, Stephen Waller, Michael Donovan, and William Clausen.



2005 Board Members: (Left to Right) John Parker, Jon Lang, Ray Sugg, Wayne Sheriff, Steve Waller, Bob Caplan, Harold Shapiro and Mike Donovan

By now you should have received the National Quarterly publication with a great article on our annual Kids Meets. Many thanks to Harold Shapiro for the effort of putting the article together and to all members involved in the yearly May Meet.

A reminder that membership dues are now due for 2005. Enclosed with this newsletter is your 2005 dues renewal form. Western Division dues are \$15 annually. Please fill out the form and mail it to the address specified, with your payment, or, you can bring it to the next meeting and give it to Harold Shapiro with your payment.

I look forward to working for you at home and at the National level. It is going to be a great 2005 and let's get going.

- Wayne S. Sheriff

Meet Recaps

Report by Steve Waller, Secretary for 2004

The **November Meet** was held on Saturday Nov. 20th. There were plenty of trains for sale on the tables. The display theme was "Thanksgiving", or a recent acquisition of which you were thankful to receive.

Jay Keeley brought the new Lionel Polar Express set. It was one of the hottest toys for the holidays, sometimes selling \$200 over MSRP. Jay reminded club members not to buy overpriced sets in a panic, because Lionel has a two-year license for The Polar Express. Product will again be in stores when the DVD version of the film is released in the fall of 2005. The film is a must-see for any train fan. Try to catch the 3D version at an IMAX theater.

Bob Trimble showed a rare Union Pacific Lucky Piece. Originally, the aluminum token was given away free during the nationwide tour of the M-10000 Streamliner, more than seventy years ago. That same year, 1934, saw the introduction of Lionel's toy M-10000, which ran on tubular "O-72" gauge tracks.

Mario Liberatore displayed a Lionel ornament by Hallmark, while Emmert Stouffer wound up his Lionel Rail Zeppelin by Schylling.

Bob Caplan showed some TCA Golden Anniversary items. A like-new 152 crossing gate in the box (with insert) that was acquired on eBay for \$20 and some 9700 Lionel-MPC boxcars on 9200 frames, which were bought at Cal-Stewart for considerably more money.

Steve Waller exhibited a Lionel 2174 Santa Fe dockside steam switcher (6-28624) with smoke, light and whistle that sold for under \$100 new in November 2004. Steve also discussed Lionel's recent Chapter 11 bankruptcy, which was brought about in response to a forty million dollar lawsuit won by MTH trains, subject to appeal. For the time being, it's business-as-usual at Lionel, until the matter can be settled. To learn more, go to www.lionel.com and click on "chat" with Lionel President Jerry Calabrese. You won't get to talk "live" with the company president, but you will be able to read Lionel's side of the story.

The randomly selected winner of the display prize was Bob Spellmire, who exhibited a green MTH PCC San Francisco trolley. Bob took home a nice new Lionel boxcar. Door prize winners were Nancy Cochran, Emmert Stouffer and Mario Liberatore, who all got to choose a Lionel freight car. Bob Caplan won a crisp \$100 bill in the Zephyr raffle.



Dennis Taube is mesmerized by the 'upside down' train displayed at the December meet.

December brought our special holiday meet, which was held on Saturday, December 11, 2004. Besides the usual compliment of seller's tables packed with trains, a nice lunch was provided FREE for members and their guests.

Bob Spellmire and the elections committee (John Abbe & Alan Rebis) certified the results of the Western Division vote. Congratulations to our new 2005 Officers and Board of Directors.

Richard Keppel and **Jerry Johnson** supervised their giant operating layout in the south room. Richard's wife Lou & son Chris, and Jerry's son Steven helped. Among the items spotted on the layout were an MTH Premiere Pennsy Atlantic E6, a Lionel Classics 381 State Set, an original Western Coil Zephyr, and a repro Ives 1734. There were also two unusual Lionel Aquarium cars running: a Fabulous Sea Monkeys car and an Aliens car. A K-Line Starlight Diner added atmosphere to the pike.



Trains were running, good food was being consumed, the holiday spirit was abounding, at the December Western Division Holiday Party

There was veritable smorgasbord set out on the tables in the west room. Cheryl Shapiro spearheaded the food service. Members contributed potluck side dishes & desserts and helped with serving. Several six-foot sandwiches were brought in from Gelson's Market and everyone agreed they were the best we've tried. The club also provided drinks and cake. Members provided Side Dishes, Desserts, and Holiday Salads. Thanks to everyone who helped, including (but not limited to) Wayne Sheriff, Jon Lang, Harold and Cheryl Shapiro, Bob & Kay Spellmire and Les & Nancy Cochran.

Several members added to the holiday mood by bringing items to exhibit. Bob Caplan showed a Lionel "Calibrator" (basically, an odometer for horse-drawn wagons) from 1917. Jerry Johnson exhibited a Hallmark train display. Steve Waller set up his Christmas lights train and inflatable Santa.

Bob Lemberger brought a half dozen treasures he acquired at the Ward Kimball auction. Included were two Wells-Brimley handcars, one with Mickey Mouse and the other featuring two characters created by Ward, "Gus" & "Jaq", the mice from "Cinderella". Bob observed that the prices realized for Ward's domestic trains were pretty reasonable, while the German trains and toys went through the roof. (Four separate German items sold for \$65,000 each.) To purchase Part One of the auction catalog for

\$45, go to www.noelbarrett.com. Part Two of the Ward Kimball auction takes place on May 27 & 28, 2005 in Philadelphia, PA.

Twelve-year-old Michelle Abbe pulled the winning tickets for the prizewinners. Phil Zisakis's son Jack won the Lionel 6-31936 Pennsy Flyer steam-type starter set. In the adult member category, Emmert Stouffer and John Parker won Lionel steam sets. Jim Dykier, Steve Waller, Ron Hall and Henry Voskian won Lionel freight cars. Wayne Sheriff won the highly desirable red banquet car from the TCA 2003 Convention. There were many other prizes, including toys for the kids and present for the ladies.

After 12 months of drawings, the Lionel Pioneer Zephyr raffle finally came to a close. Ray Sugg won the last crisp \$100 bill. The big winner was David Gabay, who won the Pioneer Zephyr prototype, sure to be a high-priced collectible in the future. Congratulations to all our winners!



Jack Zisakis and his new Pennsy Flyer set.

Further News:

Darrell Brewer appreciated the get-well card that club members sent to him after he broke his hip the day before Thanksgiving. Darrell was released from the rehab center on January 5th, and is now convalescing at home. If you'd like to wish him well, his home phone is (626) 281-2006.

The Western Division website has some new photo galleries online. Be sure to check out the "Western Division History" and "49th Annual Convention" galleries at www.tcawestern.org. Many thanks to our webmaster, Harold Shapiro, for adding the photos.

Past President Russell Lange and his wife Jane moved to Idaho. Former Treasurer Dale Lange also moved to the land of potatoes. We'll miss them and would like to say "thanks" for all their contributions to the club!

The most impressive float at the 2005 Rose Parade in Pasadena was a 207-foot train, sponsored by American Honda. The train (really four floats coupled together) won the Craftsman Trophy for exceptional showmanship and dramatic impact. The consist was headed by a full-sized 4-8-4 Mountain steam-type locomotive, which ran on hidden rubber tires. The Vanderbilt-type tender had deluxe six-wheel trucks. There was a flatcar carrying flowers and a heavyweight passenger car in the rear. The train was the longest float to ever travel the Rose Parade route. Happy New Year!

- **Steve Waller**

In Memoriam

Past Western Division President Nick Grippe passed away on November 28, 2004. Nick was returning to his home in Arizona from a two-week stay in California when his Nissan Truck was rear-ended by another vehicle on Interstate 10. Nick died 10 days later from the injuries that he sustained in that accident. Nick was President in 1971 and co-chaired the TCA's 25th Anniversary Convention in 1979. Our sincerest condolences to Nick's family.