



Western Division

Train Collectors Association

Newsletter



Volume 52, No. 4

<http://www.tcawestern.org>

July - August 2006

Upcoming Meet Notices

Western Division's next train meet will take place on **Saturday, July 22nd**, in the Arcadia Senior Center, located at 405 S. Santa Anita Avenue in Arcadia, CA. The August meet will take place on Saturday the 26th. Admission is free and Sellers: *Tables are free!*

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

The July display theme will be **Convention Cars**. The display theme for August will be **Foreign Trains**. Show off that prized toy train or train related item and facilitate the transfer of knowledge on collecting toy trains. There will be a separate prize drawing for all those members who display items.

The remaining 2006 Meet dates for Western Division are: Aug 26, Sep 23, Oct 28, & Dec 16.

President's Message

By Wayne Sheriff, President, TCA Western Division

Now that we are back from attending the 52nd National TCA Convention in San Antonio, Texas, it is a good time to reflect on what Western Division has accomplished over the past year.

Aside from holding the monthly meets, WD had a table at the 2005 Cal-Stewart Meet in Pasadena, CA to attract train collectors to TCA. WD also had a table and display set up at the Fullerton Rail Fair which had 40,000 people attending. We presented a great layout for the kids and their parents to play with.

WD's annual raffle for the Lionel GG1 engine has had very good response from the membership. One of our members, Tim Simendinger, donated a custom made scale model hot air balloon in Lionel colors to raffle with all proceeds going to WD.

The 52nd TCA National Convention in San Antonio was a great time for all those attending. There were many interesting tours offered and the fellowship was very enjoyable.



2006 TCA National Board of Directors

The TCA National Board of Directors meetings were held on Wednesday and Thursday of convention week. Much time was spent on discussions of the future of TCA, including brainstorming ideas on how to retain membership, recruit new members, and museum plans. Concerns were expressed regarding current

membership being in decline and that expenses continue to increase as a result of the museum and managing of collections given to the association.

President Elect Jim Burke and his committee have spent a great amount of time on these concerns and have put in place a plan to turn around the budget and reverse the decline of the membership.

The Board of Directors spent a lot of time talking about the sale of Annual Convention Cars. This has been a good source of revenue for TCA in the past. Concern on selling appropriate amounts of cars by the first of January deadline each year, the BOD decided on a 5% discount on all cars ordered before October of each year to stimulate additional sales. As a result of this change in policy, many 2007 convention cars were sold at the 2006 convention. These cars will be advertised in upcoming issues of the TCA Quarterly and the National Headquarters News.

For those of you who are 'plugged-in' to the Internet, there is a Toy Trains Mailing List (ttml) which has been hosted by Yahoo.com that is a TCA sponsored, maintained and owned forum designed to provide a platform where toy train enthusiasts can discuss, comment, inquire, impart knowledge, and add to the rumor mill about relative merits, quality, how to, identification, repair, operation, current products, and other news bits regarding toy trains. You will also be seeing the new electronic version of the Interchange Point on-line soon.

WD's Dennis Taube has moved to the big MO. For those interested in contacting him, his address is: 1781 Deer Lane, Nixa, MO 65714. Good luck Dennis and Norma on your new life!

- Wayne



May Meet Recap

Submitted by Robert Lemberger, Secretary, TCA Western Division

There were some visitors who had come to the May meet as a result of everyone's efforts to promote Western Division at the Fullerton Railroad Days. A list of potential members was created at this event, and those listed will be sent emails and invitations to visit and join us at TCA Western.

President Wayne Sheriff called the business meeting to order and immediately introduced Jon Lang who provided an update on the

K-line/Lionel situation. Jon explained that the takeover deal was done, trucks with cargo were on the way to Detroit and that it would take about 3 or 4 months to sort out the items and ship them, but, all who placed orders should eventually receive the products. As for convention cars made by K-line, an update should be on the TCA National website. Jon also mentioned that there was an interview with Lionel's Jerry Calabrese published in 'O' Gauge RR magazine.

Wayne talked about our newest project which is for the kids club. We have started a bin for the kids to be able to assemble and play with a layout while the parents spend time visiting and doing some horse trading. Thanks to all those who have donated items.

Mike Donovan our 'theme man' announced that 'operating accessories' was this month's theme. First up, Harvey Tafel showed his 1938 operating coal tower, which is considered to be the first operating train accessory. He also had an 'O-27' gauge operating dump car.

Bob Spellmire displayed a nice American Flyer 'O' gauge track gang set made in 1941-42. Bob explained it was also made in 'S' gauge in 46-47. Mario Liberatore brought in his TCA Western Division 2003 Western Pacific convention car. Obviously this car operates and accessorizes Mario's layout nicely.

Dave Gabay hooked up a bell from atop a crossing signal. Nice work Dave, but I think my ears are still ringing. That thing is loud!

Robert Tilller showed a fine example of a Lionel operating crane. John Abbe brought in a tractor trailer unloader and a missile launching station in 'O' gauge. Jerry Johnson showed us the new K-line operating saw mill with dump car, wood pallets and figures.

Les Cochran displayed some cute Lionel fun zone booths and a



Hard Rock Cafe. Bob Trimble brought in his LGB Smurf hand car that was home made.

Harvey Tafel won the display theme drawing and selected the Western Maryland box car by Lionel. Walter Olson, Ray Sugg and Tina Corsello each won in the drawing and selected a Lionel flat car with a Pepsi van, a Lionel Penn Central boxcar and a Pennsy flat with a gondola respectively. Dave Mabee won the \$100.00 bill.

We had a special drawing for the Fullerton RR Days attendees. Tony Lopez and John Tilcea each won The TCA book "Lionel Trains, Standard of the World." Our grand prize winner of the K-line Pacemaker set was Zack Mustille. It was especially appropriate as Zack was celebrating his sixth birthday.



Dave Mabee accepts his \$100 bill from WD Treasurer Jim Kenny

In Memoriam

Long time Western Division member Harrison Bemis (58-304) passed away on May 15, 2006. His death followed a brief illness resulting from a mild stroke on May 1, 2006. A memorial service was held on Sunday, May 28th, 2006 at the Santa Paula Airport (California) where he had his aircraft repair business for 25 years (until 1995). What follows are a few facts about Harrison Bemis:

- Born January 29, 1920, Evanston, IL
- Had a lifelong fondness for toy trains since he, as a child, received a Lionel #10 passenger set in Mojave color
- Past TCA Western Division president - 1961.
- Active in the formation of TTOS in 1968, and part of the "Little Club" (Group of San Gabriel Valley guys who loved their trains).
- Is survived by his dear friend, Jeanette Dronsky (who attended train meets with him for many years) and his four children: Mike Bemis, Peggy Perkins, Randy Bemis, and Nancy Bemis.



Per Randy Bemis, some of Harrison's best memories were of the times he spent with his train collecting buddies, including Jim Kurten, Ed Largey, Dick Wheeler, the late George Sirus, and many, many others. Harrison's family wants to thank all of you who shared a friendship with him and helped to make his passion of train collecting so rewarding and memorable!