



# Western Division

## Train Collectors Association

### Newsletter



Volume 50, No. 6

"T.C.A. Western Division's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition"

September 2004



### President's Message

*By Robert Caplan,  
President, TCA Western Division*

**On Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup>,** the monthly TCA Western Division meet will be a special event. As usual, the meet will be held in the Arcadia Senior Center, located at 405 S. Santa Anita Avenue in Arcadia, CA. Sellers: *tables*

*are free!*

The special meet will be a celebration of Western Division's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To get to the meeting hall, exit the 210 Freeway at Santa Anita Ave., drive south about half a mile and turn right into the parking lot. The Senior Center is located next to the lawn bowling area. Doors open at 10:00 am for table setup, trading and selling. The celebration begins with a special sit-down buffet luncheon, festivities, and special presentations at 12:00 noon. Please check our website, at <http://www.tcawestern.org/>, for location information and a detailed map!

Because we are celebrating Western Division's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the display theme for September's meet will be to show anything that has a connection to past National Conventions hosted by Western Division. This can be a convention car, banquet table item, or even something you acquired at one of the past TCA National Conventions held here in Southern California. 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 as determined by a panel of expert judges!

And speaking of prizes, there are only 9 special raffle tickets remaining for the new 2004 Lionel Pioneer Zephyr Set. This beautiful set includes the locomotive, RPO baggage car, coach car, observation car, TrainMaster Command, Odyssey System, maintenance free motors, fan driven smoke and much more. Tickets are \$20 each. When they are all sold that's it! Having a raffle ticket also makes you eligible to have the chance to become a hundred dollar winner during the monthly drawings. And, if you don't have a ticket, you will not have the opportunity to win this beautiful new Zephyr at the December meet!

Last month Nancy Cochran was the lucky winner of a crisp new \$100 bill in the Zephyr raffle! You must be present at the meet to win the \$100 bill!



*Nancy was ecstatic!*

On September 14, 1954 TCA Western Division was created and came into existence. To commemorate this great event in history, we are hosting a celebration that will be special for all TCA Western Division members and their families. We will stop all trading at 12:00 Noon so that all those present can partake in a most marvelous catered luncheon. After lunch, some very special presentations will be made to acknowledge Western Division's past presidents and family members' efforts to further the hobby of toy train collecting. We will also honor Betty Kimball and award her with the title of "National Honorary Member". There will be a special slide presentation of historical photographs from the 1966 and 1971 TCA National Conventions that were hosted by Western Division.

Oh, by the way, did I mention the PRIZES? Western Division will be giving away 2 complete train sets, a year's subscription to Classic Toy Trains magazine, 2 pre-paid registration packets for the 2004 Cal-Stewart meet, a RED Western Division TCA 2003 6464 style Convention Banquet car, a special software Screen Saver by Angela Trotta Thomas, and much more!

If you plan on attending this spectacular event, you must RSVP by September 18, 2004 by calling Robert Caplan at (213) 382-5266 or Harold Shapiro at (818) 986-9975. Please provide your first and last name and the total number of persons in your party that will be attending.

Membership, Membership!!!! As part of our "Western Division Membership Drive" for 2004 we are promoting a "Membership Contest". The member that recruits the most people to become new members of our division during the year will be awarded a RED Western Division TCA 2003 Convention Banquet Car. Just bring in the most new members, to our GREAT Western Division, and the Car is yours!!

*-Bob Caplan*

### 2005 TCA National Elections



Western Division Past President Russell S. Lange has been nominated to run for the office of TCA National Vice-President in the upcoming election. Please show your support by voting for him when your ballot arrives in the mail soon.

## August Meet Recap

*Submitted By Steve Waller, Recording Secretary*

The August Meet was held on Saturday Aug. 28<sup>th</sup> at the Arcadia Senior Center. There was a big turnout with 69 members in attendance - one of the largest gatherings of the year. There were some very desirable items for sale on the tables. We had *two* layouts in operation, one very small and one very large (more details below.)

President Bob Caplan called the business meeting to order at 11:45 am. He welcomed long-time member Chuck Stone, who drove seven hours each way from Penn Valley, CA (north of Sacramento) to see us. Chuck had some wonderful prewar items for sale on his table. He promised he'd be back in September for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meet & Barbeque.



*Chuck Stone had some great items on his table, and sold quite a bit.*

Our president reminded us why this September is special. We are celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of our Division in September 1954 by Evan Middleton (operator of the Train Shop at Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park, CA). In the ensuing years, our division has hosted 5 National Conventions including:

- 5<sup>th</sup> at Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park, CA (1959)
- 12<sup>th</sup> at the Miramar Hotel in Santa Monica, CA (1966)
- 17<sup>th</sup> at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, CA (1971)
- 25<sup>th</sup> at the Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, CA (1979)
- 49<sup>th</sup> at the Convention Center in Ontario, CA (2003)

For the display table in September, Bob would like us to bring items from any of those past conventions.

On September 25, 2004, doors open at the regular time of 10:00 am for buying and selling. Then, there will be a specially catered barbeque luncheon at noon. We will honor past-presidents of Western Division and their families during the luncheon. For more details, see the President's Message in this newsletter.

The big Eastern Division Meet at York, PA is coming up October 15 & 16. Bob Caplan will be the auctioneer at the Strasburg Museum Open House on October 14. Details can be found at <http://www.traincollectors.org/york/index.html>.

The collection of Thomas W. Sefton (TCA Life Member 59-360) consisting of rare prewar trains is now on display at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. For more info, go to <http://www.csrnf.org/doc.asp?id=404>.

The Cal-Stewart meet is coming up November 12-14. Go to <http://www.cal-stewart.org/>.

The first half of the auction of the collection belonging to the late Ward Kimball will take place on November 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> in Philadelphia, PA. You can bid over the Internet or attend this auction in person. A copy of the press release is at <http://www.liveauctioneers.com/pr/aug2604.html>.

You can also visit Ward & Betty Kimball's Grizzly Flats Railroad online at <http://www.gfrr.com/welcome.html>. Once you get there, click on the doors of any of the structures (depot, firehouse or engine shed) to get an inside tour.

The display theme for August (and one that Ward would have loved) was "train wrecks". Participants included Bob Caplan, Jim Kenney, Les Cochran, Ray Sugg, Al Vargas, Harold Shapiro, John Abbe, Bob Trimble, Steve Waller, Mario Liberatore and Harvey Houck. Every smashed train had a story, and there were some whoppers!

Eleven-year-old Michelle Abbe (who has recovered completely from back surgery and is no longer wearing her brace—hurray!) randomly selected the prize winners at the August meet. The prizes included a crisp \$100 bill for the 50th Anniversary Raffle (won by Les & Nancy Cochran), a complete Lionel train set (won by Les & Nancy Cochran, again!), "O" scale freight cars (winners: Wayne Sheriff, John Abbe, Les & Nancy Cochran - not again!), train CD-ROM/DVDs (Mike Galante and Bob Lemberger) and more. Don't miss the Western Division meets; you may be a lucky winner! (Just ask Les & Nancy Cochran.)

August was the inauguration of Cheryl Shapiro's kitchen. There was a nice variety of food & drink. Cheryl impressed us all by handing out a survey on what we'd like to eat at future meets. In September the meeting will be catered, so Cheryl will be opening the kitchen again in October. Bring your appetites!

Richard Keppel and Jerry Johnson were on hand again with a giant operating layout for the August meet. Joining them were Matt Jackson of the Angel's Gate Hi-Railers in San Pedro, CA. For more information on Angel's Gate visit <http://home.earthlink.net/~mcjackson/angelsgate.htm>



*Christopher Keppel, Matt Jackson, Jerry Johnson and Jon Lang controlling the vast, back room railroad empire.*

Richard's son, Chris, had a digital camera and took lots of photos of the layout.

Among the equipment seen on the four-track mainline were Jon Lang's steam locomotives, a Lionel ATSF 3751 and a Weaver Milwaukee Road 261. Also polishing the rails from MTH were a full-scale Pennsy GG-1, a Virginian 700 Triplex steam engine, and a Milwaukee Bi-Polar electric with matching cars (including a Skytop observation). On the Standard gauge tracks were an MTH 408e with matching



passenger cars and a restored American Flyer 4637 with four Pocahontas cars.

As a bonus, Jay Keeley brought his new super-compact trolley layout to operate. It used an old-fashioned “block system” with insulated rails to keep the trolleys from rear-ending each other as each made their station stops. It was very ingenious and attracted quite a crowd of on-lookers!



*Jay Keeley's super-compact multiple trolley layout.*

Don't miss the September meet and luncheon on Saturday, September 25, 2004! You must RSVP if you plan to attend.

## August Meet Photographs



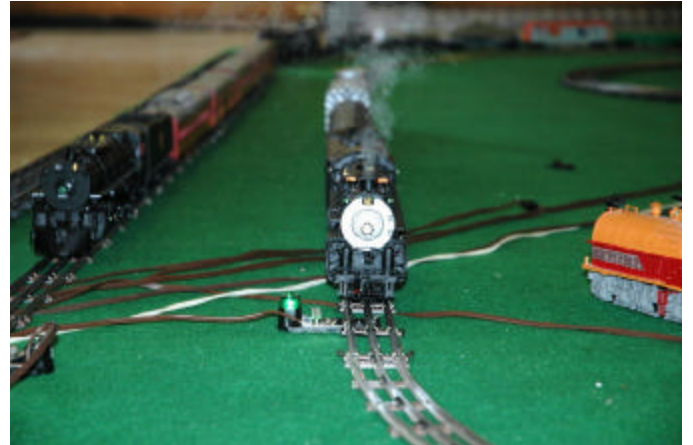
*Chuck Stone drove 7 hours with a car load of trains to sell including a Lionel #442 Diner that was like new in the box, and a set of Lionel #205 LCL containers also like new in the box.*



*Harvey Houck had a very large collection of hand painted railroad commemorative plates for sale.*



*The hustle and bustle at the August meet – at some points it looked like Union Station during rush hour.*



*Some of the trains racing the tracks on the backroom layout courtesy of Richard Keppel*



*Jerry Blaine had some great prewar items for sale on his table, including a pristine Lionel #636W City of Denver streamliner set, and a Marx Orphan Annie stove*



*'O' Gauge races past Standard gauge in the make believe Railroad Empire of the back room*





*Harold Shapiro & Bob Caplan are having more fun than a barrel of monkeys.*

## July Meet Recap

*Submitted by Steve Waller, Recording Secretary*

The July Meet was held on Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> at the Arcadia Senior Center. Doors opened at 10:00 am and there were lots of trains for sale, plus a huge operating layout.

President Bob Caplan began the Business Meeting at noon, by giving the group a quick review of National Convention, which was held in June just outside Pittsburgh, PA. TCA is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (as is Western Division), and there were a lot of gold-plated items at the Convention to prove it. To view more gold, visit [www.traincollectors.org](http://www.traincollectors.org) or [www.mth-railking.com](http://www.mth-railking.com) and scroll down on the "news" section.

Bob reminded members that all items sold at a TCA meet must adhere to the rules and regulations of the Standards Committee. For example, reproduction catalogs must be clearly marked as such on both the front & back cover. As you may know, Bob is the appointed Western Division member to the Standards Committee.

TCA Western Division received a \$1000 check from National for adding the most new memberships in the past year. And speaking of congratulations, our own Betty Kimball was made an Honorary Member, which was passed unanimously by the National Board of Directors. Only nine other persons have ever been given this honor.

Our esteemed Western Division Immediate Past President Russell Lange will be running for National Vice President this year. Don't forget to vote, and consider giving Russ your support! Wouldn't it be great to have a Western Division member as one of the National Officers again?

The 480-page National Directory has been published and mailed to all members. It includes an eight-page reproduction of the first directory from January 1955. There were 65 members listed in that directory, while today we have more than 31,000. Western Division member (and Past President) John Parker is the official TCA Historian.

Bob Lemberger spoke about a problem with UPS (United Parcel Service) shipping valuable toy trains. He owns a nice 400E Blue Comet locomotive that had its frame cracked in transit. The matter has since been resolved to his satisfaction (see Bob for details).

The July display theme was a patriotic "red, white & blue" and/or a special item from the 50<sup>th</sup> National Convention. Participants included Bob Caplan, Dale Lange, Les Cochran,

Mike Jenkins, Wayne Sheriff, John Abbe, Bob Trimble, Bob Lemberger, Alan Rebis and Steve Waller.

There were many prizes given away at the July meet. These included a crisp \$100 bill for the June & July drawings of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Raffle (won by Bob Caplan & Wayne Sheriff), a valuable 49<sup>th</sup> Convention Banquet Car in red (winner Bob Trimble), "O" scale K-Line freight cars (Don Stotts & William Grove), a Dept. 56 collectible figure (Steve Waller) and a Polar Express "coming soon" movie poster (Michelle Abbe). It pays to attend the Western Division meets!

Richard Keppel and Jerry Johnson worked hard on the gigantic operating layout in the south room for the July meet. Richard premiered a new portable console for his DCS (Digital Command System) that makes set-up easier and more reliable. There were six trains running at once on Standard and O-27 gauge track (two loops of each), using both DCS from Mike's Train House and Lionel's TMCC (Train Master Command Control). Among the "O" gauge big steam locomotives spotted were a 4-8-8-4 Big Boy, a 2-10-4 Texas and two 4-8-4 Northern-type Santa Fe 3751 engines. Seen running on the Standard gauge rails were an MTH Ives Olympian and an MTH 440E, plus an American Flyer Legionnaire's set.

Our meet is now listed on the Mike's Train House website at <http://www.mth-railking.com/dcsshow.asp>. While you're on the web, be sure to check out Western Division's site at [www.tcawestern.org](http://www.tcawestern.org).

## TCA History - A Blast from the Past!



*TCA Western Division Founders in 1954:  
(from left) George Smith CM59 and 1960 President of Western Division, Dick Thompson CM63, Edwin Demack CM 15 and Western Division Secretary Treasurer 1954-57, Ralph Pauly CM 45 and 1959 President of Western Division, Frank Cox CM 13, 3rd TCA National President and 1956 Western Division President and Evan Middleton CM 2, first President of Western Division and at the same time served as the first Vice-President of TCA National. Photo taken by Herb Morley CM 43, 1965 President of Western Division and President of TCA National 1961-1962.*