



Special Edition



THE ORDERBOARD

TSRR and Tomball



Photo by Vincent Walker

N'Crowd visits Texas State Railroad and Tomball Depot Museum

N'Crowd rides the Texas State Railroad!

N'Crowd members joined friends from the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club for a ride behind steam on the Texas State Railroad on May 26. The successful outing was organized by N'Crowd Vice President Richard Bartlett.

Richard picked a great day for our visit, as it was the first steam-powered train of the 2018 season and it marked the first outing for the refurbished former TSRR No. 300. Now lettered as Southern Pine Lumber Co. No. 28, the 2-8-0 looks less like a circus engine and more like a working locomotive. N'Crowd member Gordon Bliss says, "They got rid of that awful red jacketing and the engine is now all black with a graphite smoke box, and it looks awesome!"

TSRR marked No. 28's return to service by posing it before the day's run with T&P 2-10-2 No. 610 and the TSRR's recently restored EMD FP9 No. 125. The diesel is painted in an MKT-inspired red, silver and yellow paint scheme, as shown on the front cover of this issue. Gordon reports that a lot of railfans and others were on hand to see the

newly turned-out locomotives.

The trip originated at Palestine. Gordon says, "It was a great ride with 13 N'Crowd and 19 San Jac members riding. I think we had some new engineers, not sure if they knew the railroad that well or not. A couple of times I think we got up to 25 to 30 mph and then down to a crawl at the top of a couple of the hills. The best part was he slipped the drivers at least eight or nine times, producing some of the best stack talk I think I have ever heard here."

After returning to Palestine from Rusk, No. 28 was turned on the wye and then used to return the FP9 and 610 to the car barn. Gordon says, "But the best part was watching No. 28 try to shove 610 into the barn. She is a heavy engine and he slipped her once and then very slowly eased her in."

According to the TSRR website, steam trains will run out of Palestine through July and then start departing from the Rusk depot in August and September. Excursions run every Thursday, Friday and Saturday.



Southern Pine Lumber Co. No. 128, with its new "working class" look, was the star of the day for steam fans at its 2018 debut on the Texas State Railroad. Built in 1917 by Baldwin Locomotive Works for the U.S. Army, No. 128 is one of two surviving U.S. Army "Pershing" locomotives. After the Great War ended, the 2-8-0 was sold for work in the lumber industry in Louisiana and Texas. No. 128 was donated to TSRR in 1976, but did not enter excursion service until the late 1980s. For much of its career on the state-owned railroad, the locomotive sported a bright red boiler jacket and gleaming yellow lettering and striping, as seen in the inset photo. Main photo by Gordon Bliss; inset by Tom Marsh



Above, action at the Palestine car barn as Texas State Railroad 2-8-0 No. 28 prepares for a 10 a.m. departure. Photo by James Senneff, Jr.



TSRR kicked off its 2018 season with the debut of a restored streamlined diesel, FP9 No. 125. The locomotive was built in the late 1950s for Canadian National Railway by GMD, the Canadian division of GM Electro-Motive Division. According to its website, TSRR will use the cab unit “on a number of select dates throughout the 2018 season”. At left above, T&P No. 610 stands next to gleaming, “new” Texas State Railroad FP9 No. 125, while at right, N’Crowd member Vincent Walker poses with No. 125. Left by Vincent Walker, right by Vincent C. Walker



Above, despite the heat, N’Crowd members enjoy the ride in one of Texas State Railroad’s open-window excursion cars. Photos by Gordon Bliss



Above, SPL Co. No. 28 strikes a fine pose on its first day of operation on the Texas State Railroad in 2018. The 2-8-0 turned 100 years old in 2017. Photo by Vincent Walker



Above, No. 28's engineer puts on a show as the train crosses the Neches River. Photo by Gordon Bliss

At right, this is shortline railroading in the piney woods of East Texas: a tree has fallen across the tracks. Photo by James Senneff, Jr.



N' Crowd Tours Tomball Depot Park

By Tom Marsh

N' Crowd's 40th Anniversary year activities continued on Sunday, June 24, with a tour of the Tomball Depot Museum.

The Tomball depot was built in the early 1900s by the Trinity & Brazos Valley Railway. It is now owned by the city and houses a large Z-scale model railroad and artifacts related to Tomball's history.

The depot has been moved from its original location, but it still sits alongside the railroad. The former T&BV mainline through Tomball is now operated by BNSF.

The town was originally named Peck, but was renamed in 1907 in honor of Thomas Henry Ball after the coming of the railroad. Tom Ball was responsible for the railroad building through the community.



Our day started with lunch at Brautigam's Bar N Grill just a block away from the depot. Despite the "N" in the name, there was no N-scale stuff in the restaurant, so we headed to the depot to see the recently installed Z-scale layout. A bay window caboose on the property houses a Lionel layout, while a new extension to a shed allows display of a Fairmont motor car.



BC&G represented at 13th Annual 24 Hours@Saginaw

By Tom Marsh



Your editor counting trains at the 2018 24 Hours@Saginaw train-watching event. Photo by Jerry Dorcz

The North Texas Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and the Saginaw Chamber of Commerce hosted the 13th annual “24 Hours@Saginaw” event on Friday and Saturday, May 25-26, and I was asked by the organizer to be the “Official Train Counter”. I did so in style in a BC&G Safety T-Shirt.

Rather than counting trains, the Official Train Counter counts movements through the busy Saginaw interlocking. This year, 58 movements were recorded. In addition to through and local freight trains, moves included Amtrak’s *Heartland Flyer*, several transfer runs between the BNSF’s former FW&D and Santa Fe facilities, three light engine moves and three hi-rail vehicle moves.

24 Hours@Saginaw attracts an increasing number of young railfans and many camp out overnight at the site with their families. Organizers estimate participants this year numbered in excess of 150. The event provides a safe venue to catch the rail action just north of Fort Worth, where the mainlines of the former Rock Island, Fort Worth & Denver and Santa Fe railroads funnel through the confines of the junction. The Rock Island line is now operated by Union Pacific; the other two are important BNSF lines. At the site, the Saginaw Chamber of Commerce is housed in the restored Houston & Texas Central depot from Kosse, Texas, and the railfan-friendly chamber facilities include restrooms and ample parking.

