

News from Houston N'Crowd



THE ORDERBOARD

July/August 2016



Kansas City here we come! Gordon Bliss reports on the 2016 N-Scale Enthusiast National N-Scale Convention in KC starting on page 8. Along the way, Gordon stopped off in North Texas to visit Dean Ferris's N-scale Oregon Joint Line, which features this spectacular canyon view. Photo by Gordon Bliss

"GREEN EYE" - CLEAR BLOCK

by Samuel Townsel II, President

Join in the fun: layouts, operations and railfanning

Building a Permanent Sectional Layout

Everyone understands that getting into model railroading is a significant commitment of time and resources. One of the first steps is to ask "Where can I place my layout?" and then "What benchwork design should I use, permanent or something else?"

Trying to answer these questions can quickly discourage potential model railroaders from getting into the hobby. So how to solve this? Consider using the sectional-to-permanent approach.

The concept is fairly simple. Design and build your layout using a modular concept, one that lends itself to being quickly assembled and disassembled, if necessary, with little-to-no work lost. By using the sectional concept, you can design your major towns or industries on individual sections that you can keep in the event that you

have to change or move your railroad.

As with traditional layout design, you start with what scale you want to model in terms of era, road name, geographical area, etc. Once you figure that out, it's time to put something on paper. A good rule of thumb is to block your layout in four- or eight-foot long sections with a depth of 12, 18 or 24 inches. With this in mind, you can place your major towns and/or industries on these modular sections. By designing your railroad in this manner, you can then build it from repetitive elements, and your railroad will be subdivided into manageable pieces for benchwork, wiring, lighting and detailing.

Unfortunately, I do not have the space in this issue of *The Orderboard* to detail additional design considerations for this concept as they relate to benchwork, backdrops, roadbed, trackwork and scenery. However, plenty of how-

UP 1988, the Katy Heritage Unit, was spotted next to the former MKT depot in Katy over the 4th of July weekend. Photo by Samuel Townsell II



N'Crowd Wednesday Membership Meetings:
July 20 / August 17 / September 21 / October 19

BC&G Operating Sessions Even Months 1st Sunday:
August 7 / October 2 / December 4

Most activities take place at Papa Ben's Train Place, 4007-E Bellaire Blvd. Our monthly membership meetings start at 7 p.m. Sunday Ops Sessions start at 5 p.m. Come early to join us for dinner!

to books on building modular layouts are available at Papa Ben's or from other sources. Just remember, the reason for this design and construction method is to build a railroad that you can operate rather quickly without the fear of losing everything or starting over if the realities of life result in changing circumstances.

So now that we're over that hurdle, go out and see what you can build: Maybe you can have something ready for the home layout tours coming up in November! No? I know that is aggressive, but nevertheless, happy railroading in the meantime!

N'Crowd August Operating Session

This regularly-scheduled N'Crowd operating session was conducted on Sunday, Aug. 7. The session was preceded by great anticipation of finally christening our heavy passenger operations, but that fell flat! Maybe that job will be tackled at our next session, which is scheduled for Oct. 2. Nevertheless, seven members participated in a fairly smooth session. Thank you Dan, Randy, Fred and

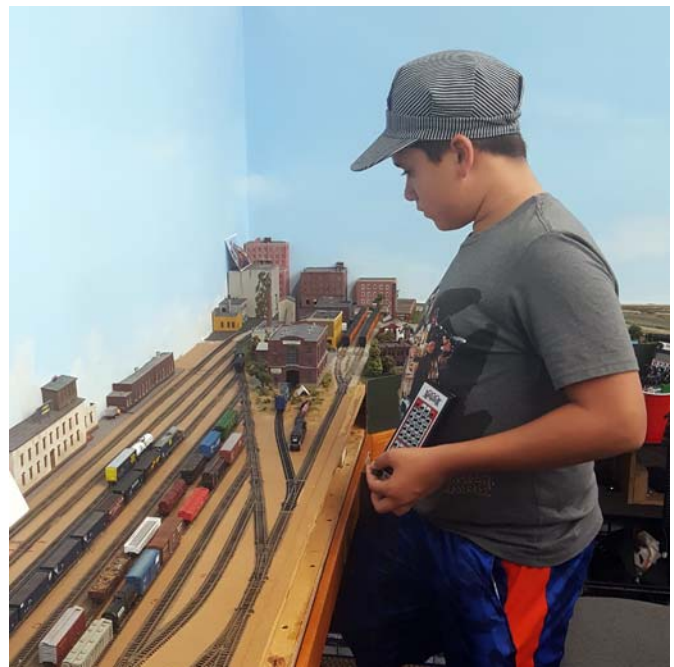
Michael for coming out and participating. Michael, one of our youngest members, took the reins at Englewood Yard and did a fantastic job! A very special thank you to Eddie and Gordon for taking the time to prepare everything for a great session. Everyone should come out and join the fun! See you all next time.

MKT Heritage Unit on Display

In case you were not able to make it to Kansas City for the great railfanning during the National N-Scale Convention or to Colorado and Wyoming to watch Union Pacific's 844 speed the Denver Post Special to and from the Cheyenne Frontier Days this summer, we did have a local treat in the form of UP's Missouri-Kansas-Texas heritage unit on display at the old Katy Depot over the 4th of July. It was a great consolation prize for local railfanners!

What will you come across on the rails? Go out and railfan! Just be safe and always use common sense when it comes to the railroads and their property.

Samuel



The most recent BC&G operating session was held Aug. 7. The next session will take place Oct. 2. The Sunday sessions start at 5 p.m. Photos by Samuel Townsell II.



**Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
May 18, 2016
Prepared by James Senneff, Jr. - Secretary**

The next meeting is 15 June 2016 at Papa Ben's at 7:00 p.m.

President's Report: Samuel Townsel II called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. Both Digitrax UTR4s are repaired and on the way back.

Minutes: Harvey Stalarow moved and Gordon Bliss seconded a motion to accept the April meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed.

New Members: Steve Rawley and son Taylor Rawley, both from Houston; Taylor attends school in San Francisco and is working towards his master's degree in music at San Francisco Conservatory of Music (classical opera). He received his bachelor's degree at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

Door Prizes: Con-Cor autorack cars were won by Michael Cianciolo, Gordon Bliss, Steve Lancaster, Harvey Stalarow and James Senneff, Jr.

Vice President's Report: VP Harvey Stalarow reported that his contact at the Houston Metro Light Rail Operations Facility is out of town this week. Harvey will get with him on the details about our visit.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Eddie Aycock reported checking balance of \$11,172, CD value \$4,819. We are ahead \$353 for the year. Membership is coming along. We are getting new members periodically; we have around 46 members. It is interesting to Eddie that we are getting new members but some of them are not showing up for meetings.

Secretary's Report: Secretary James C. Senneff, Jr. reported 22 members in attendance tonight: Michael Cianciolo, Dejan Suskarcevic, Tom Wayburn, Amy Wayburn, Randy Ollett, Samuel Townsel II, Richard Bartlett, James Senneff, Jr., Fred Keal, Eddie Aycock, Harvey Stalarow, Tom Marsh, Gordon Bliss, Steve Rawley, Taylor Rawley, John Sweigart, Ted Davis, Dominic Valdez, Charlie Aselin, Steve Lancaster, Rick Townsend, Vince Walker and Bryan Turrin (guest).

New Business: Vince Walker commented bolster pin color code chart needs to be updated to account for new members. Tom Marsh made the point that the people that are going to

bring their cars to the club layout and leave them are the people that should be on the color code chart. Sam brought up that if you are not leaving cars then it is not necessary to update chart. Tom Marsh said that he would put something in the newsletter about the members color code chart. Gordon will send Tom some additional information on it.

Gordon noted that the N-Scale National Convention will take place in Kansas City in five weeks. Samuel, Gordon and Richard are going. Additional information on the convention is on www.nscaleenthusiast.com. This should be a very good convention and Samuel said Kansas City is a railfan's dream, with busy junctions, yards and a triple flyover. Tom Marsh commented that a really neat hobby shop called Doc's is so close to the mainline that if you take one step off the porch you're good, and if take a second step away from the porch, you are on the mainline in the middle of the street. Possible slight exaggeration, but not much. Gordon said the Show Me Model Railroad Co. in Grandview, Mo., is smaller than Doc's but has five times the stock and it takes at least two hours to see it all. Gordon added that the last time he went there he came home very poor.

Gordon said while doing his job of looking at flood-damaged automobiles, he came across a wide-vision caboose along Old Alameda Road. He also saw a crane car working in Humble. He also saw UP business car *Arden* in Spring. He's seen a lot of cool stuff lately and will submit some photos for the newsletter.

Upcoming Club Events: Gordon is doing a clinic on engine maintenance tonight. He is also going to show how to put a traction tire back on a steam locomotive.

Old Business: Vincent said that the discussion about what to do with T&NO steamer No. 982 that is downtown is brewing again. He will get back to us with more information as plans move ahead. Vince's son is pushing him to put out some information on his layout, so we may see something soon. Samuel said that he would have the N'Crowd Code of Conduct by the June meeting.

Tom Marsh reminded everyone that NMRA LSR Division 8 has a clinic every month at Bayland Park. The last clinic was on how to use the tree flocking machine. The next clinic will

Houston N'Crowd 2016 Officers and Volunteers

President Samuel Townsel II
Vice President Harvey Stalarow
Secretary James C. Senneff, Jr.
Treasurer Eddie Aycock

Board Member (2016) Al Hague
Board Member (2017) Richard Bartlett
Board Member (2018) Joe Kingsberry
Layout Master Al Hague
Editor & Webmaster Tom Marsh

be on how to fill out the contest forms for the upcoming NMRA LSR Regional Convention. The LSR Convention is in Arlington. For the July clinic, Ray Byer will give a clinic on installing DCC decoders in locomotives. He will assist attendees with installations in their own engines. Gil Freitag had his 80th birthday party last Saturday. The party included an operating session on Gil's Stoney Creek & Western.

Samuel asked if there was a decision on the switch behind Union Station in the "concrete". Additional discussion and proposals are needed before a decision is made. Tom Marsh said that he thinks that a siding is needed in the area so that run-around moves can be made for Union Station. Samuel would like Ray to prepare a diagram to show the options for rebuilding the siding track and the Union Station throat tracks to improve performance in this area of the layout.

Motion to adjourn by Tom Marsh and seconded by Gordon Bliss. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
June 15, 2016
Prepared by James Senneff, Jr. - Secretary

The next meeting is 20 July 2016 at Papa Ben's at 7:00 p.m.

President's Report: None

Vice President's Report: Vice President Harvey Stalarow called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. President Samuel Townsell II joined the meeting in progress.

Door Prizes: Door prize winners were Steve Lancaster, boxcar; Ted Davis, wood chip car; Eddie Aycock, gondola; Ray Byers, hopper; Garrett Schoen, Greyhound bus.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Eddie Aycock reports checking balance of \$11,233.32, CD value \$4819.25. We are ahead \$404 for the year.

Secretary's Report: Secretary James C. Senneff, Jr. reported 20 members in attendance tonight: Joe Kingsberry, Dejan Suskarcevic, Tom Wayburn, Amy Wayburn, Randy Ollett, Samuel Townsell II, Richard Bartlett, James Senneff, Jr., Fred Keal, Eddie Aycock, Harvey Stalarow, Tom Marsh, Gordon Bliss, John Sweigart, Ted Davis, Steve Lancaster, Garrett Schoen, Allan Melton, Ray Byer and Al Hague.

Minutes: Gordon motioned to accept the May meeting minutes as presented. Ray seconded the motion; motion passed.

New Business: NMRA LSR is having its convention next week in Arlington. Ray notes that some expenses related to the convention may be tax deductible. Harvey said to review the details carefully and be cautious. Next year's LSR convention will be in Houston; San Jacinto Model Railroad Club is hosting at the Westchase Hilton.

LSR Division 8 clinic series continues on the second Saturday of July with Ray presenting a clinic on DCC decoder installation. Ray Byer said that you can bring your engine, decoder and tools necessary to install the decoder and you get the opportunity to install the decoder yourself with some assistance. August's clinic will be on LEDs. Tom Marsh mentioned that the Northwest Crossing Swap-O-Rama is the same day, Aug. 13. This may affect clinic attendance.

Next weekend there is an O-scale collector's train show at the Marriott Westchase on Briar Park. The show is open to the public with no admission charge. Ray said that some of the clinics they are doing will translate to all scales. Tom Marsh said you should have received your May/June newsletter. If not, get your correct e-mail address to Treasurer Eddie Aycock.

Ted Davis was asking for an explanation of an Amtrak Cabbage. Tom Marsh said NPCU or Non-Powered Control Unit is the real name. Cabbage is the railfan name. It is an F40 that has been turned into an unpowered control unit with a baggage door on the side. On the Heartland Flyer, the baggage area is not used. Rapido is probably going to produce an HO version, but not one in N scale.

Gordon Bliss is hosting an operating session this weekend and has some slots available; see him after the meeting tonight if you want to be part of the operating session. The session is from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. John Sweigart announced that he will not be at the store this Saturday for N'Crowd room coverage.

Old Business: Ted Davis asked when the areas on the layout that have not had the scenery done yet can be worked on. Discussion continued with mention that Al Hague is working on backdrops in multiple areas of the layout. Al said that he brought three of them tonight so that the Club could decide where we want to put them. Al said that he will continue to work and complete the last four backdrops. Ted said that he did not want to go into a lot of detail but he asked if the oil refinery was finished. The person to ask about the refinery was Samuel and he was not in attendance at the time. Tom Marsh has talked to Samuel and he still has more to do but lately he has had to slow down on the progress of the oil refinery. When Samuel arrived, he said that the refinery is operational, and that some scenery details still need to be done. He is trying to figure out how detailed he wants to make the scene due to the amount of visitor traffic in the area and the potential for damage. Samuel is still looking for information on the tank car loading platforms. Gordon mentioned that he thinks Rick Townsend took one the club built and the other kit and would work on it. We will have to get with Rick on the progress of the tank loading platforms. Eddie Aycock said Model Railroader Magazine has indexed lots of articles and information. He said that maybe Samuel can find more information on tank car loading facilities there. Gordon noted that there is a tank car loading rack right next to Alameda Road for reference.

The discussion continued, with Tom Marsh noting there is an area that due to age or wear and tear on the layout needs to be touched up with some brown paint and ground foam. Al Hague said that he has done some touch-up but he would look for the brown paint so he could do some more and others could also. Tom Marsh also mentioned that some trees could be glued back to the layout. Joe Kingsberry said that he seems to do that every weekend. Tom brought up the suggestion that maybe we should not have any trees to the outside of the track where people can continually knock them off. James asked if we have a list from the layout committee of the areas that are ready to have the scenery completed. He mentioned that we need to know what is ready before we think about continuing with that process. Al Hague said that there is no current list and that the committee would need to work on that. In general, the oil refinery is not ready yet. Anywhere there is backdrop to be done is not ready. He and

the committee will try to come up with a list for review at the next N'Crowd meeting.

Gordon asked Ray if we were ready to pull some of the wires that are no longer connected to the Englewood yard track, as the yard seems to be running good. He wanted to make sure that everything was done electrically before he starts pulling the old wiring and starts ballasting. Tom Marsh also added that when people painted and ballasted Union Station that some of the cars were not removed and got some paint overspray damage. He just wants to let everyone know that the cars need to be removed before that kind of work takes place. He concluded by saying that the area needs to be properly prepped before ballasting so that no permanent damage happens to any other cars, etc.

Allan Melton mentioned that something should be done to

Extra cars lengthen Aug. 7 *Sunset Limited* consist by Tom Marsh

Extra cars tacked onto the Aug. 7 eastbound *Sunset Limited* carried outgoing Amtrak President Joseph Boardman and guests returning from a swing through the west that focused primarily on the successful effort to keep Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* operating on its current route across Raton Pass. At right, Amtrak's sole dome car at Houston on Aug. 7; the *Sunset Limited* consist details are below.



Amtrak Train No. 2 **Ar Houston 1247 (1 hr 37 min late); DP Houston 1307 (57 min late); AR New Orleans 2239 (59 min late)**
Sunset Limited **8/7/2016**

Loco/Car No./Name	Type	Notes
145	P42DC	Ph III Heritage, GE 2001
822	P40	Ph III Heritage, GE 1993
204	P42DC	GE 2001
130	P42DC	GE 2000
1164	Heritage Baggage	ex-ATSF 3651, Budd 1953
34052	Superliner I Coach	Pullman Standard 1979
31043	Superliner I Coach/Baggage	Pullman Standard 1980
33027	Superliner II Sightseer Lounge	Bombardier 1994
38062	Superliner II Diner	Bombardier 1995
32033	Superliner I Sleeper	Pullman Standard 1980
39003	Superliner II Transition Dorm/Sleeper	Bombardier 1993
10001 Beech Grove	Amfleet I (converted)	Ph III Heritage, ex-Amfleet I coach 21222, converted to official car 1984, Budd 1976
10021 Pacific Cape	10 Roomette/6 Double Bedroom sleeper	Ph III Heritage, ex-Union Pacific "Pacific Cape", Budd 1950
62004	Viewliner Sleeping Car	Amerail 1996, "Viewliner 62044" on name board; ex-"Beach View", Amerail 1996
10031 Ocean View	Dome Lounge	Ph III Heritage, ex-GN Empire Builder Great Dome 1391 "Ocean View", Budd 1955
10004 American View	Viewliner Inspection/Theater Car	Converted 2014 from prototype Viewliner sleeper 2301 (later 620910), Budd 1988

- Amtrak President Joseph Boardman and guests occupying last five cars
- Consist is reversed vs. usual *Sunset Limited* arrangement to allow transition Superliner II Dormitory/Sleeper to be coupled to the Boardman cars
- All equipment not noted as "Ph III Heritage" painted in current Amtrak Phase VI scheme
- Three of the cars in the consist are over 60 years old; newest car is 20 years old; average age of cars is 37.75 years; average age of locos is 17.25 years



Eastbound Amtrak Train No. 2 on its way out of Houston on Aug. 7 with five extra cars carrying Amtrak officials.

fix the Union Station tracks. The discussion continued that this would be at least a day job with multiple people helping. Trains could not go any farther than Englewood Yard or go to staging, and the Union Station balloon track would be closed for the duration of the repairs. Ray said that we need to go back to the discussion on what is to be done with Union Station tracks and fixing the switch that is in “concrete” on the nearby runaround track. It has been tabled in the past. Richard Bartlett moved that we make a decision without additional delay.

After discussion, Gordon moved to eliminate as many S-curves as possible in the leads to Union Station. He also moved to pull the switch out of the plaster and move it far enough to place it out of the plaster “concrete”. This will shorten the siding to a length less than the club standard. Tom Marsh seconded the motion and it passed. The tentative time frame for the repair is sometime in July. Gordon and Ray will get together to repair the area before the August operating session.

Al Hague mentioned that there are some mismatched cars in Union Station. He wanted to know if the Club wanted to have him look into making them matched sets. The discus-

sion concluded that this is normal for all railroads and that there’s no reason to make matched sets out of them. Eddie Aycock said that the last operating session had a good turnout and everything ran smoothly. Gordon thanked everyone for removing their cars off the layout prior to setting it up for the operating session. During the session, we had three road crews and three yard crews. People rotated in and out of the different jobs. Some additional jobs can be developed, such as local industry work by Englewood Yard and engine facility work. Eddie will look into that for future operating sessions. Gordon and Eddie mentioned that for operations we need to try to add more sidings to help with the flow of the railroad. There is not much room available for this. One suggestion was to look at the Flatonia area or make the oil refinery a bigger job with more to do, such as sending trains to the oil refinery, do switch moves and then continue to other areas of the layout. Another possibility for additional operation is in the Buda area.

Samuel was asked about the progress for the rules for the kids. He said that it is mostly done but he has not shared it with the committee. Motion to adjourn made by Gordon Bliss and seconded by Ray Byers. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The end is here

A weather-beaten locomotive rolled into Union Pacific’s North Little Rock shops in late July, emerging shortly thereafter in a new coat of UP Armour Yellow.

While not an unusual occurrence in and of itself, this locomotive was Southern Pacific No. 343, the last active unit in full Southern Pacific paint. No. 343 was released from North Little Rock on July 29 as UP No. 6308, according to multiple online sources.

According to the Heritage Units website, No. 343 worked across the UP system, and was last in Houston in February of this year. One of 279 AC4400CW locomotives delivered to SP by General Electric in July 1995, No. 343 most likely would have worked through its useful service life in relative obscurity, but now will forever be footnoted by many as “the last SP locomotive”.

Roll on, Southern Pacific...



SP No. 343, the last locomotive in full, unpatched SP paint, passes through La Coste, Texas, on May 5, 2013. This past July, No. 343 was repainted in full UP Armour Yellow. Photo by Patrick Phelan

Going to Kansas City

Story and photos by Gordon Bliss



David Salamon's N-scale Deep River Southern.

This June the 24th National N-Scale Convention was held in Kansas City. Going was a given for me, but who else would go? A few emails later I had confirmed that two of my Aussie mates, Mal Risby and Steve Walker, were coming over for the convention. So the epic trip began with my mates flying into Houston, and after some railfanning and operating sessions at Eddie Aycock's and my layouts and a trip to Papa Ben's, we hit the road.

Our first stop was the Amtrak station at Fort Worth to catch the northbound and southbound *Texas Eagles* arrive and depart; the *Heartland Flyer* was also at the station awaiting its next departure. We caught UP's MoPac heritage unit during a quick trip over to Tower 55, and we took a couple pictures of the Texas & Pacific station.

Heading north, we saw the Grapevine Vintage Railroad train departing the Fort Worth Stockyards, visited the busy junction at Saginaw and then made

a stop at the BNSF headquarters building and the railroad's gift shop. After a huge steak at the stockyards, we visited Dean Ferris's N-scale Oregon Joint Line, a Northern Pacific layout set in the 1970s (see cover photo).

The next day we drove to Tulsa and visited Steve Davis's HO KCS layout during his monthly operating session, and both Aussies ran a train. David Salamon met us at Steve's place and escorted us to Sammy Carlile's HO ATSF Hereford Sub layout.

After we grabbed a bite to eat, we headed over to David's N-scale Deep River Southern layout for an operating session. David is also building a live steam railroad in his backyard and is only about 25 feet and one bridge from completing his first loop. After a great time running trains, David invited us to stay overnight at his home, an invitation we gladly accepted.

After getting some pointers on railfanning the South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad line north out of Tulsa, we were off to Kansas City. Our first stop in the area was Chuck Hitchcock's HO Argentine Industrial District Railway. Chuck's layout is all industrial switching and is focused on the operations at a large grain elevator. He found a man that used to work at the elevator and learned how the real railroad ran it, making his operation as realistic as possible.

After checking in at the hotel we started one of the best parts of the convention, which is meeting old friends and making new ones. The gang gathered for some grub and then set off to inspect room sales and join the bull sessions.

On Monday we made a trip to Rodney Eddington's N-scale Feather River Canyon layout. The mainline was just completed a few months ago so no scenery is in place yet, but we had 50 car trains operating on this large railroad. Rodney ordered in some ribs and after feeding our faces we ran trains for a couple of hours. Our next stop was for an operating session on John Acheson's N-scale ATSF layout, where I ended up dispatching this time instead of running the road.

On Tuesday several members of the gang took a bus to the Union Pacific Railroad Museum in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The rest of us checked out some area hobby shops, the best being Show Me Trains in Grandview, Mo. Our day also included the new Kansas City streetcar system, and visits to

Union Station, Santa Fe Jct. and the historic West Bottoms district, home to Doc's Caboose Train Warehouse. Tuesday evening we visited Joe Kasper's huge BN N-scale layout for an operating session. The main yard is four feet wide and about 25 feet long, built with all hand laid turnouts and fully signaled with three CTC boards!

On Wednesday we operated on Jon Percey's N-scale Buffalo & Pittsburgh layout, which runs well and uses manual switch lists. Dropping off models and items for the auction happened in the afternoon and the welcome reception was that evening.

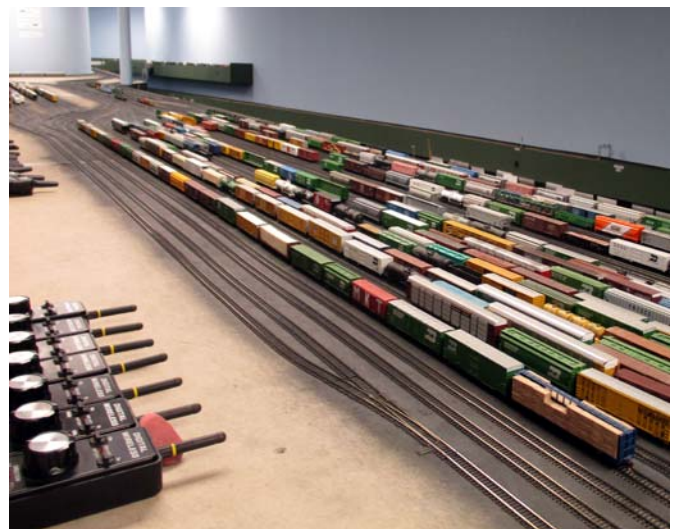
Thursday morning was an open time with most people on the layout tour buses, while some operated on Jon Percey's layout again. That evening we operated on Brett Overholtzer's N-scale MKT layout, which is about 95 percent complete and features an operating signaling system. The Swap-A-Rama took place on Friday and a dinner train option was available that evening. Saturday brought the public show and clinics and the evening banquet. On Sunday, the manufacturer's breakfast ended the convention and then everyone was off to the airports or starting the drive home.

Next time the N-Scale National Convention is held less than a 12 hour drive away, you should go! If you haven't attended a national event, you don't know what you are missing!

The 2017 NSE convention will take place June 21-25 in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Chuck Hitchcock's HO Argentine Industrial District Railway





Top left: Rodney Eddington's N-scale Western Pacific Feather River Canyon layout.

Second row left: The new Kansas City Streetcar started operation a month before the National N-Scale Convention.

Bottom left: The view outside the front door of Doc's Caboose hobby shop in the West Bottoms.

Top right: Argentine Yard on John Acheson's N-Scale Santa Fe layout.

Second row right: One of our gang who works for the streetcar system arranged a peek at the maintenance facility.

Bottom right: Joe Kaspar's N-scale Burlington Northern layout features a huge yard with hand-laid turnouts.

Brazos River blues

by Tom Marsh

Union Pacific's Brazos River troubles at its Richmond crossing of the river worsened in July. Shortly after initial repairs to the bridge's easternmost pier were nearing completion and the line had been reopened, problems were discovered with the next pier to the west, and the bridge was closed again. These photos show the progression of work in recent weeks. A major bridge repair project could be a featured scene on a model railroad.



June 11, top left: Repairs are underway after record flood waters washed away a portion of the east bank of the Brazos River at the Sunset Route crossing.

June 19, top right: The track has been leveled and work to reopen the bridge continues.

June 24, second left: The bridge has reopened to rail traffic and the old concrete pier is being demolished.

July 9, second right: The bridge is closed again and work has shifted to the next pier west. Additional equipment is mobilized, including modular barges and winches on special piles driven at various locations in the river.

July 21, third left: A new support structure has been built at the second pier and the old structure is being demolished.

July 30, third right: The bridge has reopened but work continues on the second pier.

August 8, right: The modular barges and other equipment are being demobilized.



LCL

Less than Car Load: a few notes from your editor

NWX puts on a show: Our friends at Northwest Crossing Model Railroad Club pulled off another successful Swap-O-Rama on Saturday, Aug. 13. Despite the threat of rain, the fourth annual edition of the event attracted a good crowd to Northwest Mall, where NWX has a storefront with large modular N- and HO-scale layouts. For this year's expanded event, NWX arranged for an air-conditioned vacant store across from their space to be opened for vendors and a planned Free-MoN modular layout. This moved the swap meet tables from the mall area, which can be very warm when the sun is beating down on the ceiling's skylight.

A number of N'Crowd members were spotted wheeling, dealing and BSing at the Swap-O-Rama, and various traders had an interesting selection of used N-scale models. George Hollwedel of Prototype N Scale Models had his full line of special-run cars available for sale as well.

Unfortunately, the Free-MoN layout did not come together due to a few technical issues, but the participants agreed to try again next year. The photo below shows a Free-MoN module built by N'Crowd member Tom Wayburn completed with scenery by your editor for the NWX event.



HOUSTON N'CROWD 2016 TIME TABLE - SUBJECT TO CHANGE

July 20

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place, 7 p.m.

August 7

BC&G Sunday Operating Session, 5 p.m.

August 13

Northwest Crossing Operating Model Railroad Club Great Swap-O-Rama and Train Layout Show, Northwest Mall

NMRA LSR Div 8 Clinic, Bayland Park, Houston: LEDs for Model Railroading

August 17

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place, 7 p.m.

September 10

NMRA LSR Div 8 Clinic, Bayland Park, Houston

September 17-18

Central Texas Area Model Railroaders 34th Annual Temple Model Train Show, Frank W. Mayborn Civic and Convention Center

September 21

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place, 7 p.m.

Oct. 1-2

Alamo Model Railroad Engineers 2016 Train Show, Freeman Coliseum, San Antonio

October 8

NMRA LSR Div 8 Clinic, Bayland Park, Houston

THE ORDERBOARD *from Houston N'Crowd*

Tom Marsh, Editor

Published fairly regularly for members and friends of N'Crowd Model Railroad Society, Inc., Houston, Texas.

Send newsletter contributions to:

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Please note: We reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity and length.

Visit our Web site:

www.houstonNcrowd.org

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