

News from Houston N'Crowd



January/February 2019

# THE ORDERBOARD

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Genesis replacement in the works



Changing road numbers



George H.W. Bush Funeral Train



Test & Tune sessions begin



N'Crowd party animals

# "GREEN EYE" - CLEAR BLOCK

by Tom Marsh, President

## Welcome to 2019!

Happy New Year! Let's jump right into things.

**The new lineup:** Your 2019 officers and volunteers are listed in the box below. Joining the team this year are Bill Busch as secretary and Randy Ollet as board member. Thanks to both for volunteering.

Also, thanks to outgoing Vice President Richard Bartlett and Secretary James Senneff for their efforts in support of Houston N'Crowd!

As always, if you have any comments, suggestions or concerns, don't hesitate to speak with any of our officers or other volunteers.

**Membership renewal time:** It's time to renew your membership if you have not already. A renewal form is included with the email delivery of this edition of *The Orderboard*. You can also download the form or renew online at [www.houstonncrowd.org/join.html](http://www.houstonncrowd.org/join.html). Dues remain \$15 if paid by cash or check and \$16 online using PayPal. Remember, you do not need a PayPal account to use your credit or debit card to renew.

Renewal forms are also available in the layout room at Papa Ben's or you can request the form by email to [tom@houstonncrowd.org](mailto:tom@houstonncrowd.org).

**First Test & Tune session a success:** Around a half dozen N'Crowd members took part in the club's first Test & Tune session, which was held at Papa Ben's Train Place on Wednesday, Jan. 2. The focus was on DCC issues, and with the assistance of our resident experts Gordon Bliss and Ray Byer, several members were able to resolve issues with decoder-equipped locomotives. Most of the issues revolved around the questions "Why is it doing this?" and "Why is it not doing that?", and for the most part, everyone went home with their locomotives in better fettle than when they arrived. Thanks Gordon and Ray for helping out!

The next Test & Tune session will take place Wednesday, March 6, starting at 6 p.m. at Papa Ben's.

**Greater Houston Train Show on the horizon:** The Greater Houston Train Show takes place Saturday, Feb. 16, at the Stafford Centre. As we have in the past, N'Crowd will participate with our DC test track and distribute information about the club. We'll be signing up show volunteers at our January membership meeting, so please consider offering an hour or two of your time.

Happy Railroading!

Tom

### Houston N'Crowd 2019 Officers and Volunteers

President ..... Tom Marsh  
Vice President ..... Joe Kingsberry  
Secretary ..... Bill Busch  
Treasurer ..... Eddie Aycock  
Board Member (2019) ..... Allan Melton

Board Member (2020) ..... Samuel Townsell II  
Board Member (2021) ..... Randy Ollet  
Immediate Past President ..... Samuel Townsell II  
Layout Master ..... Joe Kingsberry  
Editor & Webmaster ..... Tom Marsh



#### N'Crowd Wednesday Membership Meetings:

January 16 / February 20 / March 20 / April 17 / May 15  
Meetings start at 7 p.m. at Papa Ben's Train Place, 4007-E Bellaire Blvd. and are open to all.

**N'Crowd Test & Tune Sessions:** First Wednesday of odd-numbered months. 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Papa Ben's.

**N'Crowd Operating Sessions:** First Sunday of even-numbered months. Watch your email for information.



# Easy car number change

by Mauricio Varon

I recently acquired a three-car Japanese cement hopper set by Kawai to expand my small collection. I got a good deal on them but unfortunately all three had the same car number. After watching some videos of how to change engine numbers, I knew there would be a way the same could apply to cars.

The first question I needed answered was, how to remove the original numbers? During one of our meetings N'Crowd member Ray Byer took a look at one of the cars I'd brought in and quickly determined it would require the simple eraser method, so I acquired a Staedtler Mars Plastic eraser. I went with the Staedtler in particular because it won't leave any residue; regular pink erasers sometimes transfer a pinkish tint to some surfaces and I didn't want to take any chances.

At home with the proper materials, I isolated the

area with scotch tape and after gently rubbing for about 10 minutes, the numbers were removed without any damage to the paint.

Reaching out to contacts on an online forum I have joined, I was able to locate the correct font to create the numbers I needed. With further online research I found someone to do the hard part, actually print the custom white decals. Once they arrived, it was just a matter of cutting, soaking and precisely applying them.

Having never done this before, I found it was fairly easy. If anyone else is thinking of doing this, don't hesitate and update those car numbers you've been wanting to do.

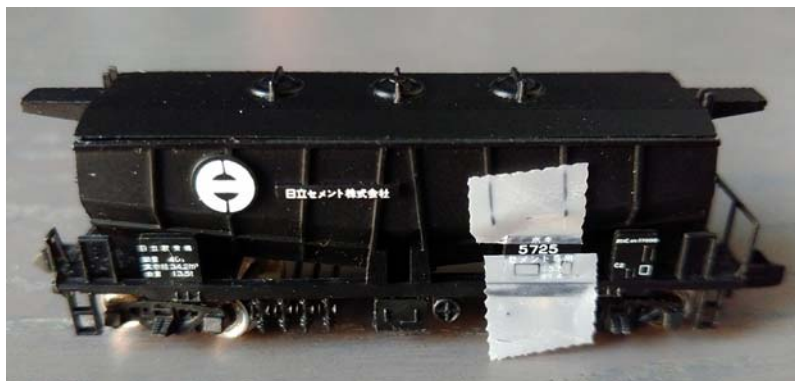
My decals were printed by William J.A. Brillinger, Precision Design Co. See his web site for more information: [www.pdc.ca](http://www.pdc.ca)



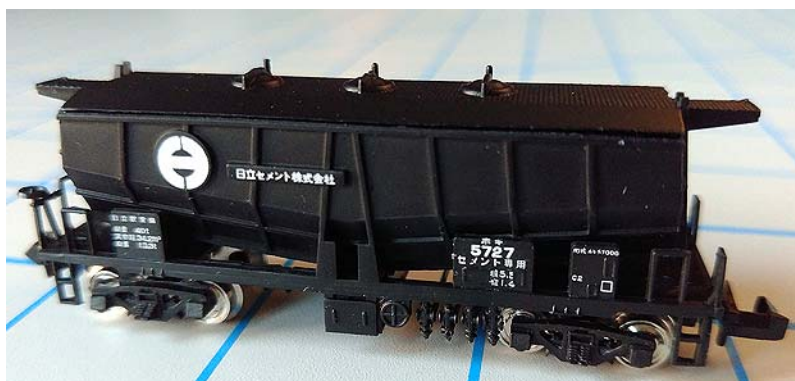
Above, the three-car set of cement hoppers in the original Kawai packaging. All three cars carried the same road number.



Right top: The road number changes were easy with the right supplies, a Staedtler eraser and custom decals.



Right middle: The area around the lettering to be changed was masked before the eraser was used to gently rub away the original numbers.



Right bottom: Success! No evidence of the change is visible and the new road number is a near-perfect match to the original.

# Beginning of the end for Amtrak GEs *by Tom Marsh*



*Battle-weary Amtrak GE Genesis P42DC No. 48 departs Houston, May 8, 2018. New Siemens Chargers will start replacing Amtrak's aging GEs in 2021. No. 48 was built in early 1997. Photo by Tom Marsh*

Amtrak has ordered 75 new Charger diesel-electric locomotives from Siemens Mobility that will work primarily on long-distance trains, displacing some of the national carrier's aging GE P40 and P42DC Genesis locomotives. The \$850 million Siemens order includes options for additional locomotives for use on state-supported trains and "for future growth", according to an Amtrak statement. Powered by a 4,400 hp 16-cylinder Cummins QSK95 diesel engine, the new locomotives will be capable of speeds up to 125 mph and will meet Tier 4 emissions requirements. The new Chargers are expected to start entering long-distance service in the second half of 2021 and eventually will power the *Auto Train*, *California Zephyr*, *Capitol Limited*, *Cardinal*, *City of New Orleans*, *Coast Starlight*, *Crescent*, *Empire Builder*, *Lake Shore Limited*, *Palmetto*, *Silver Meteor*, *Silver Star*, *Southwest Chief*, *Sunset Limited* and *Texas Eagle*.

Amtrak will use available funds to pay for the new locomotives, which will be built at the Siemens Mobility facility in Sacramento, Calif. Siemens Chargers first entered revenue Amtrak service in 2017 and currently operate on Amtrak state-supported routes in California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri, Michigan and Washington.

The GE P40 and P42DC locomotives that will be replaced by Chargers have been Amtrak's front-line long-distance power since the 1990s. Amtrak originally owned 44 P40s and 208 P42s, some of which will be 28 years old by the time the Chargers take over in 2021. P40 construction began in 1993, while the successor P42DCs were built between 1996 and 2001.



*Artist's rendering of new Charger locomotive ordered by Amtrak. Image courtesy of Siemens Mobility*



# UP's George H.W. Bush Funeral Train *by Tom Marsh*

Union Pacific's operation of the 11-car George H.W. Bush Funeral Train from Spring to College Station on Dec. 6, 2018, has been and will be widely covered online and in print. However, I wanted to make note of the train and its consist for the record in *The Orderboard*.



Top two, the George H.W. Bush Funeral Train passing through Navasota on its way to College Station. Thousands of people braved chilly, wet weather to see the train. Photos by Tom Marsh

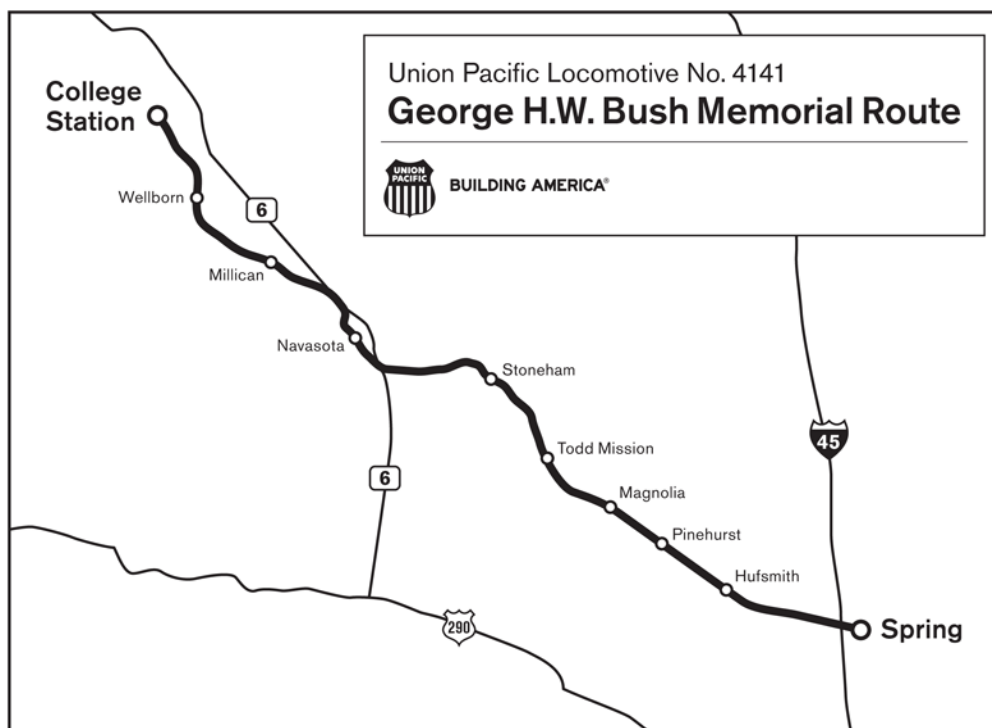
Above, Barbara and George Bush in the cab of No. 4141 during its unveiling in College Station in 2005. Photo courtesy Union Pacific

## George H.W. Bush Funeral Train Consist

*All equipment owned by Union Pacific*

No.	Name	Type
4141 .... *		EMD SD70ACe
9096 .....		EMD SD70AH
2066 .....		power car
8008 .... City of Portland .....		dome diner
9009 .... City of San Francisco ..		dome lounge
5769 .... Council Bluffs .....		baggage recreation
101 .... Lone Star .....		business
9004 .... Harriman .....		dome lounge
302 .... Overland .....		diner
1610 .... Portola deluxe .....		sleeper
5011 .... City of Denver .....		diner
9005 .... Walter Dean .....		dome lounge
119 .... Kenifick .....		business

*\*Although lettered "George Bush 41 Presidential Library and Museum", Union Pacific generally refers to the locomotive as "Locomotive No. 4141".*



Union Pacific provided this map of the Bush funeral train's route. The rail distance from Spring to College Station is about 70 miles.

# Festive gathering rings out our 40th anniversary year

N'Crowd members, families and friends gathered Dec. 15 at the home of Vincent and Ingrid Walker to mark the holiday season and the end of our 40th anniversary year. The fajita feast and a variety of sweets put everyone in a good mood for the combat gift exchange, which was a little more subdued in 2018 than in other years.

Everyone left full and happy. Special thanks to our hosts, the Walkers, for once again inviting us into their home!



*Ingrid checks that all is ready for dinner. Photo by Allan Melton*



*Time to dine! Photo by Allan Melton*



*The Walkers' elegant Christmas tree. Photo by Amy Wayburn*



*Above, Gordon and Ted share a laugh over chips and salsa. Photo by Allan Melton*  
*Below, the Combat Gift Exchange gets underway. Photo by Amy Wayburn*







Above, the ritual “Presentation of the Gifts” during the Combat Gift Exchange. Your president (at left) is holding the nice pair of PRR hoppers he was about to lose in the round. Photo by Allan Melton

Below, everyone was invited to see the recent progress Vincent has made on his double-deck layout. In the large photo at left, it seems the photographer is being taunted with a nice pair of PRR hoppers. Photos by Tom Marsh



### Time to renew your membership!

N’Crowd new member/renewal applications are available in the layout room at Papa Ben’s or from the N’Crowd website: [www.houstonNcrowd.org](http://www.houstonNcrowd.org)

# LCL

*Less than Car Load: a few notes from your editor*

**Website update:** The latest updates are in place at [www.houstonNcrowd.org](http://www.houstonNcrowd.org). New items available for download include:

- 2019 BC&G Photo Calendar
- 2019 Membership/Renewal Application
- All 2018 issues of *The Orderboard*

On the Photos & Other Fun Stuff page you will find three special editions of *The Orderboard* highlighting some of our 40th anniversary activities and a link to a new "Houston N'Crowd 2015/2016/2017 Photo Album". Finally, the 2019 Events Timetable includes all currently-known N'Crowd meetings, activities, train shows in our region and other items of interest for the full year. If you haven't been to the website in a while, check it out!

**Thanks, and the deadline note:** Thanks to Mauricio Varon for his informative article (page 2) on relettering

cars. Mauricio has embarked on another similar project which requires slightly different techniques. He'll be sharing his experience with us in an upcoming issue.

Speaking of which, the deadline for the March/April issue of the *The Orderboard* is Friday, March 8. Please consider sharing some of your model railroading and railfanning experiences with your N'Crowd friends!

**Amtrak in motion:** Here is an interesting website for Amtrak fans:

<https://ggwash.org/view/70250/see-a-week-of-amtrak-trips-on-one-animated-map>

The animated map displays a week's worth of movements of all Amtrak trains nationwide. The map clearly illustrates Amtrak's concentration in the Northeast, around Chicago and in California.

## HOUSTON N'CROWD 2019 TIME TABLE - SUBJECT TO CHANGE

### January 2

N'Crowd Test & Tune, Papa Ben's Train Place, 6 p.m.

### January 12

Rosenberg Railroad Museum Winter Fest

### January 16

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

### January 19-20

Dallas Area Train Show, Plano Centre

### February 3

N'Crowd Operating Session

### February 9

NMRA LSR Div 8 Clinic, Bayland Park

### February 16

Greater Houston Train Show, Stafford Centre

### February 16-17

Great Texas Train Show, Lewisville

### February 20

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

### February 23-24

43rd Annual San Antonio Model Railroad Association Jamboree & Train Show, Garden Ridge Community Center

### March 6

N'Crowd Test & Tune, Papa Ben's Train Place, 6 p.m.

### March 9

NMRA LSR Div 8 Clinic, Bayland Park

### March 16-17

Cotton Belt Train Show, East Texas Fairgrounds, Tyler

## 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:

[tom@houstonNcrowd.org](mailto:tom@houstonNcrowd.org).

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

**Visit our Web site:**

**[www.houstonNcrowd.org](http://www.houstonNcrowd.org)**

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