

# KEEPING TRACK

Official Newsletter of the Abilene Society of Model Railroaders

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## ***The Word From the Prez***

### **Adios, Amigos**

The month of November not only brings about a celebration of model railroading nationwide, and ASMR's opportunity to "show off" our great hobby locally, but it also is the start of a new year, under new leadership, for the club. The occurrence of both presents the possibility of rejuvenation as well as the prospect of increased participation, membership and maybe even a new location in the coming year. With all of this potential, the future for the club is virtually unlimited. Consequently, as I end my term as club president, I hope that the full potential of ASMR will be realized as the year unfolds. I also wish the new president, other officers, and each member, continued success and enjoyment of every aspect of the model railroading hobby during the upcoming year.

*David Damiano*

### **Club Layout Yard Update #7**

For this issue of the newsletter, there's nothing new to report on progress of the club layout's new yard. It bears repeating, however, that although the yard isn't finished, a substantial part of it is open for business now, should ASMR members decide to start holding operating sessions.

### **ASMR Meeting Notes**

There will be a business meeting on November 5, and an extremely important part of the agenda will be election of new officers. Every member is urged to attend and participate.

### **ASMR MEMBER HELPS FORMER ADDICT START A NEW LIFE.**

ASMR members often do interesting and unusual things besides model railroading, and Dr. Bernard Sherr is a good example of that fact. He was highlighted in a recent *Abilene Reporter-News* article about a former drug addict and prison inmate. As a 40-something "non-traditional student", he is attending Hardin-Simmons University and striving to make a new life for himself. Dr. Sherr, an HSU music professor, was shown helping this gentleman with an original musical he is composing at the same time he's working on his bachelor's degree. While the story has absolutely nothing to do with model railroading,

it is nice to see an ASMR member recognized publicly for a professional endeavor such as this, and the *ASMR Newsletter* would like to offer its congratulations to "Dr. Bernie".

### **The Editor Speaks**

#### ***Operations Seemed To Be Fun, So What Happened To Them?***

Earlier this year, several ASMR members started participating in improvised operating competitions staged on the club's HO layout. We filled out ID/routing cards for some of our favorite freight cars and tuned them up to meet weight, wheelset, and coupler standards. Despite some minor annoying problems with dirty track and conductivity issues, which we were able to minimize fairly quickly, everybody who participated in our home-grown "Easter Egg Hunt" sessions seemed to enjoy the competition and camaraderie. For the first time in a long time, we were doing something besides just watching trains go around the layout. It looked like the dawn of a new era of club activity, and there seemed to be a lot of enthusiasm for developing and trying out more prototypical operating sessions. After John Conley died and his family donated his freight cars to the club, we even invested the time and money needed to upgrade 50 of them to operating standards. Now, nobody would have to furnish their own cars unless they wanted to. Then, with everything looking great for really getting serious about operating, progress toward operating sessions seemed to just stop. There was some talk that we didn't have a big enough yard for building up and breaking down trains, but we have a good start on one now, and it seems to me that we should be able to resume operating. Anybody have any idea(s) as to what's holding us back, and even more important, how do we get that activity back on track? I, for one, think we are missing out on a great opportunity for a lot of fun as a club. JG

### **Model RR Meets & Events**

Nov. 5-6 – Marshall Depot's Model Train Show

Nov. 26-27 – Fort Worth GATS

Dec. 2-19 – San Antonio Transportation Museum's, "Santa's Holiday Depot".

Dec. 6-24 – ASMR layout for Abilene State School's 2005 "Christmas Lane" extravaganza

Dec. 10-11 – Houston GAT