

KEEPING TRACK

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Editor: Jim Gibson

The Word From the Prez

Mid-Year Assessment of ASMR Shows Everything Looking Good

We are now half way through 2006, and ASMR remains strong. Participation is down some because many people are taking vacations, but membership is up and interest in ASMR continues to be shown by the number of visitors we've had, including some former members who appear interested in rejoining. Our public display efforts are still paying off.

The ASMR club layout yard is nearing completion. All the yard tracks are in place. One siding is in place connecting to a previous siding. There are three more sidings to be put in, one of which will be the inter-modal yard on the north or back side of the layout.

Where is the club going from here? I think we are moving toward bigger and better things. As ASMR grows, we will have more funds to do more with. We will have more model railroaders to represent ASMR. We will have more people having fun together. We will become more diverse.

When I think of how far we've come from where we were a year or two ago I am really pleased, and I look forward to more of the same during the months ahead.

Your Prez, Ken Riediger

Cody Hilliard Wins June Operating Competition

Four ASMR members participated in an "Easter Egg Hunt" operating session on June 17. Cody Hilliard nosed out Ken Riediger to win in a "Foto Finish", with Jim Gibson and Ken England coming in later on. Mike Ziegenhagen and Charles Chinn helped with the officiating.

Mike Ziegenhagen Designs, Makes ASMR Sign for Visitors

In response to a general concern that visitors might drive right by the building housing the club layout and miss us because there was no sign announcing our presence, Mike Ziegenhagen has designed and put together a great looking placard. Approximately 20 X 30 inches in size, it can be slid into its own permanent rails on the front door whenever we are there, and then removed when we

leave so it won't be stolen or damaged until the next time it's used. Nice job, Mike!

June 3 Meeting Notes

Pres. Riediger opened the meeting at 10:05, and the following items of business were discussed. Cody Hilliard has been working on the Windmill Flats area wiring and has it set up for DCC operation. Pres. Riediger reminded everyone that we need to get our traveling modules ready for potential public showing(s) this fall. Potential new locations include the old fire station on North 2nd, and we need to check it out with the city. Other ideas include buying an old house or trailer and fixing it up. Mel Herwick said he had room on his property in Hawley for something like that if the club was interested. Cody Hilliard mentioned a club in California that sold shares and bought a location for itself. Regarding paint schemes for the diesel locos Mike Ziegenhagen donated, Jim Gibson provided a set of T&P decals, and Jim Frankenfeld said he would customize them into an ASMR road name with the T&P color scheme. Pres. Riediger checked on using the Depot for monthly business meetings, but found it isn't normally open on Saturdays. Mel Herwick proposed using a church on Beech Street that he belongs to. But the idea was more or less tabled when Mike Ziegenhagen suggested that it would probably be best if we held our meetings at our club location in case visitors and/or potential members showed up, especially after he gets that news to appear in the *Reporter-News*. Door locks have been changed on our building, and new numbered keys are being issued by Pres. Riediger. Ken England said he had some used paneling the club could have for layout skirting if we'd pick it up. (Note: right after the meeting Ken and Jim Gibson went in Ken's truck and picked up the paneling.) Pres. Riediger offered a club thanks to Jim Gibson for donating and installing used but very nice carpet for the layout room. Meeting closed at 10:53 a.m. Next meeting is set for July 1.

The Editor Speaks

Operating Can Be Both A Fun And A Challenging Situation

If you want to get a head of steam up real quick, one of the club's monthly operating sessions is a fun way to do it. Winning can give you a good

feeling, but there is a huge personal challenge to keep on going and finish well, even after the winner has picked up his six cars at various “shippers”, and successfully set them off at their destinations. Winning, or even doing well, involves a combination of luck, skill and perseverance, as I found out dramatically during the club’s most recent operating session. Four of the six cars I randomly picked waybills for were in easily accessible sidings, and I was quickly off to a good start. But the last two were “buried” in the middle of a large number of cars in the big Abilene yard, and that’s where I started having problems in a hurry. Extracting each of them involved a lot of switching, maneuvering and run-arounds, and a few times I was totally stymied as to what my next move should be. Talk about frustration! Several wasted moves and derailments from incorrectly thrown switches later, I finally managed to get the two pesky cars out of the yard, onto the main line with the rest of my train, and headed for their destinations. Unfortunately, by then my early lead had thoroughly evaporated, Cody H. and Ken R. were way ahead and battling for a win! Although I didn’t win this time, the important thing is that I had a good time, and I like to think that I learned from my mistakes and will do better next time. Another plus was that my engine ran like a top, except for the times when my inept

switch setting caused it to derail!! Cody’s efforts to eliminate wiring and continuity gremlins seems to be paying off. I used to think watching trains run on a well scenic-ed layout was all the model railroad satisfaction I needed, but after a few operating competitions, I have a whole new outlook on that aspect of the hobby. I still enjoy watching the trains just run, but it doesn’t compare with the excitement of figuring out how to overcome realistic obstacles and make the most efficient switching moves with your train as you go about picking up and setting out your assigned railcars all over the layout. If you haven’t done so, you should give operating a try the next time we do it. You might be as pleasantly surprised as I’ve been. **JG**

Model RR Meets & Shows

