

# KEEPING TRACK

Official Newsletter of the Abilene Society of Model Railroaders

Volume 3, Issue 6

August 1, 2007

Editor: Jim Gibson

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

### **A Gentle Reminder About Some Very Important Issues**

*Responsibility.* Sometimes it's a word we hate to hear, but none the less as adults we have to take it seriously. As parents we take responsibility for raising our children to be responsible human beings. You're probably asking yourself what this has to do with model railroading, for a group that has as one of its goals being able to relax, have fun and get away from our day-to-day "responsibilities". I'm glad you asked. Each of us shows respect to one another. We also show respect for each others' property. When we meet we have "rules" about our behavior, like being kind and respectful to each other and respecting each others' opinions, likes, dislikes etc.

This brings me to my first point -- if one member brings his or her equipment to the club to run, or if they leave it on the layout, we either need to leave it alone and just admire it, or if they don't mind us using it we need to put it back where they left it.

My second point is that we are lucky to have a space for the club and be paying a relatively small amount for it. I realize it is not prime real estate, but none the less we need to make sure the doors are locked, the layout is turned off and unplugged, the lights are turned off and the air conditioner or heater are turned off *every single time we leave*.

The consequences of not following this policy include a possible rent increase, or we could even be asked to move out. None of us want this. Yes, we would all like a larger, better accessible location, but until that happens we need to take care of what we have. Those of us with keys have a higher degree of responsibility than those that do not. Sometimes we all need a little reminder. We are all good people and let's keep having fun, but let's all do it in a responsible way. Thanks to each one of you for your cooperation.

***Your President, Ken Riediger***

## **New ASMR Member Profile**

Keith Savage actually joined the club over a month ago after attending a Fort Worth train show with several members. He is in the process of building an N-scale layout in a 4X20-foot space in

an upstairs "bonus room" in his home. Keith says that he started out in N-scale back during high school in San Antonio, and still prefers that size of model trains because he can get more layout in the space he has available. He describes his job as "self employed", and likes the Santa Fe railroad and watching trains. Keith and his wife Melanie have three children, and we welcome him officially, even if it's a bit belatedly, as a new member.

## **July Ops Session Results In Yet Another Win For Cody!**

This month's operating session followed a brief called meeting on July 21 to discuss paneling options for the club's HO-scale layout. Operations commenced with six members manning their locomotives, including Dan Brady, Cody Hilliard, Ken England, Steve England, Nick Kenneally, and Mel Herwick. Unfortunately, Dan received a phone call from work and had to drop out, leaving five competitors to battle it out. Due to a busy work schedule, this was the first time Nick had been able to participate, while the others had multiple sessions under their belts. One thing that did not happen during this session that has occurred in the past was ending up with several operators tied up in the Abilene yard. There was, however, some frustration from that old nemesis -- confusion between "shippers" and "consignees". Regardless of that fact, all had fun and enjoyed the session. The order of finish was: Cody, Ken E., Mel, Nick and Steve E. I'm personally looking forward to being in the next operating session as a "player".

Ken R.

## **ASMR Meeting Notes**

The July 7 business meeting was called to order by Pres. Ken Riediger at 10:05 a.m. Cody Hilliard's minutes of the June 2 meeting and Dan Brady's monthly treasurer's report were both read and approved. Pres. Riediger reported that he and Jim Gibson put frame boards and scenery material on the Abilene State School teaching layout, and he will take it home to paint the edges and see about delivering it ASAP. Members discussed an idea from Ken England for a "family plan" membership rate and came up with the following proposal to be voted on at the next meeting: \$20 for families, with

all official duties such as voting, holding office, having a key, etc., limited to the adult sponsor member only. Ken R. discussed his and the club's open houses for National Model Railroad month in November. His will be Nov. 17 & 18, and the members tentatively scheduled the club's for Sat., Nov. 10, from 10 a.m. till 5 p.m. Members discussed the idea of adding paneling to the layout in place of cloth, and Ken E. and Dusty Garison volunteered to check on materials and report back at a called meeting on July 21 to vote on spending club funds for this project. Dusty asked about putting the demo layout up in the Mall of Abilene during November, and after a brief discussion of the idea, he agreed to check with the mall marketing person on the feasibility. Ken E. reminded everybody that election of new officers would be in October. He also put forth the idea of trying to bring former members back into the club and some methods for doing this were discussed. Dusty suggested a one-time "amnesty program" for members who haven't been very active and have fallen behind in their dues in order to try and bring them back in. Jim Gibson said we should make an effort to send newsletters to members who pay dues but don't regularly come to the club, to keep them informed and give them something to show for their dues. Current newsletters also need to be on the club website, and Dusty volunteered to do this as soon as Jim emails him copies of the newsletters. Ken E. asked that whenever members move cars on his corner module around, would they please put them back where they were when they're finished? He also suggested that members clean up after themselves when they bring food or drinks into the club. He also volunteered to put up boxes for the newsletters. Ken suggested re-doing the club's tri-fold brochures to include color photos, which he has the capability of reproducing in small numbers for special occasions, and Jim Gibson said he would do it. Cody Hilliard announced that he is officially engaged to Lauren Pugh. Jim Gibson commented that we need to check with Dan Brady on members overdue on dues, and send them letters in accordance with the club policy on this issue. The meeting closed at 11:12 a.m., and the next meeting is scheduled for August 4.

### **The Editor Speaks**

## ***Mineral Wells Trailway Traces Old T&P Roadbed***

A few months ago I wrote about a Texas Parks & Wildlife hiking/biking trail that follows an abandoned Ft. Worth & Denver RR right of way in the Panhandle area. There's another one closer to home, and it has ties to one of our favorite railroads, the Texas & Pacific. I'm talking about the Lake Mineral Wells State Trailway, which extends for 20 miles between downtown Mineral Wells and Weatherford. When Mineral Wells was in its heyday as a famous health spa featuring reputedly restorative mineral waters, the railroad where the trail is now carried thousands of people from points east in search of a "cure" for various ailments. For a time the right of way belonged to the Texas & Pacific RR, but the city of Mineral Wells bought it in 1989. They operated it as the freight-carrying Mineral Wells & Eastern RR until 1992, when operations ceased and the line was officially abandoned. It opened as a trailway six years later. Two miles of the ten foot wide and very level trail are paved and the rest is crushed limestone. The longest of the trail's 16 bridges is a 500-foot span over U.S. Hwy. 180, and hikers, bicyclists, and horseback riders can all be accommodated. There are four trailheads and all have drinking water, restrooms, parking and information. Picnic and camping facilities are available at nearby Lake Mineral Wells State Park. An abundance of wildlife and birds inhabit the rolling hills and creek beds along the route. One caveat in the Texas Parks and Wildlife website on the trail is that it can be closed during wet weather. It sounds to me like another great place in Texas where a railroad enthusiast who also likes the outdoors can satisfy both of those interests and get some good exercise in the bargain. I, for one, am ready to pack up my mountain bike and head for Mineral Wells. JG

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

Aug 18 – LSR&H Summer Model Train Show, New Braunfels, TX

Aug 25 – TCA Train Show, Richardson, TX

Sep 15 -16 – Centra Mod 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Model Train Show, Temple, TX