

KEEPING TRACK

Official Newsletter of the Abilene Society of Model Railroaders

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The Word From The Prez

Summer is Gone, But Many Activities

Are Still on ASMR's Year-End Agenda

Can you believe summer is gone? Well, the heat may not be gone but school is back in session and vacations are mostly over. We have done a lot of things this summer but there are still a lot of things coming up.

One of the most recent things we did was to operate on Jim Norwood's layout. A major difference for this session, though, was that we had a rookie dispatcher. All I really wanted to do was learn more about the dispatching set-up that comes with Rail-Op, but I ended up getting to sit in Jim's dispatcher "hot seat" for the whole session, with only occasional help and advice from the "master". The net result was that I learned a tremendous amount from this experience. The main reason for doing this is to help me get my own Rail-Op program fully operational. Cody and I went to an Operations Camp several years ago and learned a lot of things, one of which is that Rail-op is a great program. And, the more I play and experiment with the program the more I learn about its amazing capabilities.

Now for things on the horizon. We have elections coming up next month, so be thinking who you want to lead ASMR for the next year. Also coming up is National Model Railroad Month in November, and along with that are Open Houses for the club and my home layout. Then right after that is Christmas Lane. At the rate this year has flown by so far, it will all be here before we know it. So let's all continue to have fun in model railroading.

Your Prez, Ken Riediger

PS: A warm welcome to new ASMR member **Bill Cluck**, and welcome back to two former members, **Fred Rogge** and **Joe Stewart**, who both rejoined recently.

ASMR Meeting Notes

President Ken Riediger opened the August 1 meeting at 10:01. Secretary Cody Hilliard's minutes for the July 11 meeting were read and

approved. Ken England's treasurer's report, which showed the club assets balance to be \$3,763.77, was read and approved. Ken E. announced that Joe Stewart has rejoined the club after a prolonged absence related to his work schedule. Ken R. confirmed that the operating trip to Jim Norwood's will be Aug. 22, with a departure from the Remax office at 7:00 a.m. As for Ken's next home layout operating session, he said he will have computer generated manifests ready to use by those who show up to operate on Aug. 15 at 1:30 p.m. Due to the Norwood trip, there will be no club layout operating session this month. Jim Gibson said he has nothing to report yet on a presentation for the city regarding a club site downtown. There was also nothing to report on an ASMR sponsored train show proposal that was discussed and approved at the last meeting. Due to the heat, needed club layout repairs are not proceeding yet, according to Cody Hilliard, who volunteered to make electronic fixes on the power system and feeders. The meeting was closed at 10:14 a.m. by Pres. Riediger. Next meeting is Sept 5. Note: After the meeting Cody Hilliard did his third program in a row, this time on the finer points of quality track laying.

Norwood Operating Session Provides Fun and Challenges

Five ASMR members, a former member, and a guest, attended the August 22 operating session on Jim Norwood's extensive HO scale layout in the North Richland Hills section of Fort Worth. Carpooling together from Remax with Ken England were Ken Riediger, Mel Herwick, and Jim Gibson. They were followed by Cody Hilliard and his wife, Lauren, in Cody's vehicle. At Norwood's they were joined by Dan Brady, who drove down from Oklahoma City. Shortly after 10 a.m., Jim handed out train orders, and the fun got underway. Cody and Lauren operated as a team, and Mel, Dan and Jim G. went "solo". Occasional welcome help was provided by Jim N. and Ole Melhouse, who is a regular at Norwood's. Meanwhile, Ken R., who wanted to gain expertise that will help him with conducting operating sessions on his home layout, served as the dispatcher with Jim N.

"looking over his shoulder." The only break during what proved to be a fairly intense and challenging, four hour long ops session, was a brief luncheon time-out for Pizza, which was generously provided by Jim N. After the session, everybody went to Discount Model Trains for some hobby shopping before departing for various destinations.

Clyde M. Gayoso, Sr. Dies

ASMR member Clyde Gayoso died on August 1, 2009. Clyde was born in Dallas on Sept. 1, 1939, and had lived in Merkel since 1987. He married his wife Joan in 1972, and had a daughter, two sons, and five grandkids. He was driver/owner of Gayoso Trucking. In addition to model trains, his hobbies included motorcycles, fishing, camping, model cars, and outdoor cooking. Clyde will be remembered by his friends in ASMR as a genuinely nice person who enjoyed sharing the fun and fellowship of model railroading.

Update on KR&BN RR Operations

Some historic events happened during the August operating session on the *Kannapolis River & Buffalo Northern RR*. It was the first time the railroad was run with Rail-op manifests. We also had a new operator who had never operated on the layout before. There were several mistakes on this first use of the manifests, but that's just part of the learning curve. As the operators become more familiar with the layout and I become more familiar with the Rail-op program things should get smoother. During our trip to Jim Norwood's I learned a lot about the dispatching part of the program. There are still several things that frustrate me, but I believe they will iron out as I continue to work more with the program. After the last session I made some changes that should make things easier for me. As Jim told me, "You just need to keep working and experimenting 'till you get it where you want it." All in all it was fun, and I look forward to the next session. **KR**

The Editor Speaks

Modern Buildings and Scenery Can Be Real Attention Getters

The September, 2009 issue of *Model Railroader* magazine has an excellent article on how to detail a very realistic and photogenic layout, and take great photos of it. The author is Pelle Soeborg, who I consider to be one of the

best all around model railroaders there is today. Ironically, although his *Daneville & Donner River* pike features modern American western settings, modeled to perfection, Pelle is a native Scandinavian living in Denmark!

He has had a profound influence on my model railroad philosophy! Up until I saw what Pelle was doing, I pretty much modeled the traditional, nostalgic, 50s era. But after viewing his realistic, eye-catching scenery with modern motels, familiar fast-food eateries, convenience stores, and even little details like interstate highway signs, I decided it was time to start transitioning to a more up-to-date layout. I was helped in this decision by all the really sharp looking, reasonably priced, modern die-cast vehicles that have become available in 1:87 scale, as well as the increasing number of modern era structure kits available now.

There are a couple of other things about modeling the modern era that also make it attractive. I find that people at public layout events tend to react with more enjoyment or excitement to things they see on a layout that they are familiar with in today's world. This is especially true of younger people, who generally don't have all that much interest in nostalgia, no matter how well it is modeled. For example, young kids who won't relate to an old fashioned "Joe's Diner", will immediately recognize and react to a Wendy's or a Burger King. Similarly, they won't pay much attention to a classic 1934 Duesenberg SJ, but park a new Lamborghini on your layout, and I guarantee they'll home in on it -- and probably point and comment, too. I know this for a fact, because it has already happened to me at more than one of our public events!

If you haven't seen the Pelle Soeborg article in September's *MR*, I can't recommend it highly enough. It's full of good ideas. In addition, there is a video of Pelle's layout on the *MR* website that is well worth checking out. **JG**

Model RR Meets & Events

Sep. 19 & 20 -- 27th Annual Temple Model Train Show, Temple, TX

Oct. 3 & 4 -- 21st Annual AMRE Train Show & Swap Meet, Live Oak, TX

Oct. 10 & 11 -- Lockheed-Martin Recreation Assn. Annual RR Show, Fort Worth, TX

Oct. 23 & 24 -- Railfan Weekend, Temple, TX