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LION ROARS

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Angela Grotta Thomas ©

It happens only once in a century - TWO Convention cars!

The
LCCA
version



In celebration of the 100th anniversary of Lionel in the year 2000, LCCA and LOTS will co-sponsor a Joint Convention in Dearborn, Michigan, during July 23-30, 2000. Twice the fun, twice the cars, 100 times the significance!

The
LOTS
version



The year 2000 LCCA-LOTS Joint Convention will be a special celebration for Lionel collectors/operators. Signature events will be a factory tour of the Lionel manufacturing facility and Visitor Center at Chesterfield, a tour of Madison Hardware, and a visit to Dick Kughn's Carail Museum.

The year 2000 Convention cars will be all-Lionel, red, maxi-stack cars with containers decorated in the distinctive graphics that make CP Rail so popular. The cars will have die-cast metal trucks, a reefer unit on the bottom container, special convention notations on the undercarriage, and an extra truck for running the cars as articulated units.

Because these cars will be the first maxi-stacks produced by Lionel in several years, they will occupy a special niche. The containers will be unique for each club.

Although each club is presenting its own version, these maxi-stacks are intended to be a two-car set. LCCA members may select the club's version AND also purchase a "matching" car(s) with the LOTS graphics. This same special deal will also be in effect in reciprocal for LOTS members.

The LCCA car number is 200030 — representing the year 2000 and LCCA's 30th anniversary. The LOTS car number — 524115 — is prototypical.

NOTES: Order limit is two cars per version per member of each club. Orders must be received on or before 2/15/2000. Cars will be shipped in August, 2000.

ORDER FORM — MAY BE PHOTOCOPIED

Member name: _____ LCCA # _____

Charter Member Regular Member Family member

Version	Quantity	Price	S&H	Amount
LCCA	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	\$ 74.95	\$ 5.00	\$ 79.95
LCCA	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	149.90	10.00	159.90
LOTS	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	74.95	5.00	79.95
LOTS	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	149.90	10.00	159.90

Michigan residents only: add 6% sales tax _____
(\$4.50 ea & each multiple thereof)

Additional S&H for foreign delivery: _____
If Canada, additional \$5.00 per car _____
If Alaska & Hawaii, additional \$7.50 per car _____
If other foreign country, additional \$10.00 per car _____
Total \$ _____

For credit card purchase by MASTERCARD, VISA, or DISCOVER, please fill-in the lines below. Items will be sent to you by UPS. Because that company does not deliver to a P.O. box, a street address is required.

Mastercard VISA Discover Expires _____

Card No. _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Signature _____

By my signature, I authorize LCCA to charge my account for the amount indicated.

Enclose payment (in U.S. funds) for this offer only and mail to: LCCA, P.O. Box 479, LaSalle, IL 61301-0479. Make check or money order payable to: LCCA.

Do not combine this order with LCCA dues or any other payment to the club. Do not send cash by mail.

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Immediate Past President - Complaint against another member.
Secretary - Any administrative action not handled by LCCA Business Office and Certificates of Membership and Appreciation.
Treasurer - Club finances only.
Librarian - Back issues of *The Lion Roars*.
Editor, TLR - "Make good" copy of *The Lion Roars*.

COVER

Extending the tradition, this holiday edition of TLR includes cover artwork by Angela Trotta Thomas, "the train (and recently — old cars) lady."

Contacting the LCCA Business Office:

The **only** way to contact the Business Office is in writing to the address **below**. They will take care of: applications for membership, replace membership cards, reinstatements, **change of address, phone number changes**, death notice, commemorative orders, convention registration and club mementos.

LCCA BUSINESS OFFICE
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The President's Report

by Al Otten

HCM 429

Year 2000 Convention

Our plans for the year 2000 Joint Convention of LCCA and LOTS are proceeding very well. Believe it or not, some members have already made their reservations at the Hyatt Hotel in Dearborn, Michigan. As you probably know, the year 2000 Convention will begin on Sunday, July 23rd and conclude on the evening of Saturday, July 29th. Make your vacation plans now for this gala event. Our Convention reservation form will be published in the February 2000 issue of The Lion Roars. Look for it and act on it immediately.

End of Decade Engine and Caboose

As I write this report (on November 9), I have in front of me the year 2000 prototype of the LCCA third decade diesel — a SD-40 — and its matching extended vision caboose. Frankly, they are a knock out! This is a one-of-a-kind pair. You'll find the order blank for this combination in the double centerfold of this edition.

There are several things to remember about this special product. The club will order from Lionel only the exact number of units ordered by members in response to the purchase offer. That is, if 500 units are ordered, that's the number LCCA will specify for production by Lionel. Secondly, the engine and caboose will only be sold as a set and boxed as a pair by Lionel. Thirdly, the club will make purchasing this special pair more convenient with an optional payment plan of three monthly installments. The first payment will be due on February 1st. Please see the order blank for complete details. Keep in mind that if you elect to pay in installments, or up front in full, there will be no refund if you change your mind. The deadline for ordering this

unique engine and caboose is March 1, 2000. Don't put off ordering. Do it today!

Year 2000 Convention Car(s) — Maxistack Canadian Pacific

You first saw the year 2000 LCCA Convention car in the October '99 issue of The Lion Roars. It's a beauty. So is the companion car — the LOTS maxistack version.



LCCA version



LOTS version



Underside of the car

All I can suggest is that you order both cars today. Again, like the year 2000 engine and caboose, LCCA and LOTS will only order from Lionel the number of cars actually ordered by members.



Third Decade Engine and Caboose



October LCCA Board Meeting

Our last regular LCCA Board meeting was held on October 16th in York, Pennsylvania. Dick Maddox, President of Lionel and Tom Blishock, Senior Business Advisor from Lionel were guests at the meeting. Your Board and officers had the opportunity to hear an overview of Lionel's goals by Dick and Tom. They also answered many questions from the Board and officers. At the conclusion of the meeting, we had dinner with Dick and Tom at which time they gave us additional insight into their plans. Trust me, they are like a breath of fresh air to Lionel collectors.

Convention in the Year 2001

I am pleased to announce that our year 2001 Convention will be in Lexington, Kentucky. This is a great heartland location with many serious LCCA collectors in the region. The previous LCCA event in Lexington in 1988 was a very successful and enjoyable experience. The folks that presented the 1988 Convention will run the 2001 Convention, so you know that under their management everyone will have a great time.

By the time you read this message, Thanksgiving will have come and gone, I hope you and your family had a very enjoyable time together.

Let me take this opportunity on behalf of your officers, directors and appointed officials to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous Y2K New Year. Year 2000 should be a significant one for all the members of the LCCA — it's our 30th anniversary year and the centennial celebration of Lionel.

Thanks for being a member of and participant in the LCCA. As I said in my previous report in October, "make a resolution to participate in the next election process."

New Product Review

A Pre-Train Set for Younger Kids



Based on the newest Great Railway Adventures storybook, "The Mighty Mogul," this deluxe set features all the "bells and whistles" of a classic holiday train set. Included is the Adventure Draw Bridge, which features warning lights that signal danger as the bridge rises. The engine proceeds only when the child lowers the bridge.

Also included is plenty of Express Track to create multi-level layouts; the Mogul die-cast battery-powered engine; the color, softcover storybook, audio cassette featuring dramatic story narration and toe-tapping railroad sing-along songs, and all of the batteries required.

LCCAers who want to be Santa's helpers can find this Lionel-licensed item at selected toy stores. The toy is well-suited for children aged 5 to 8.

Toy Trunk Railroad

by Erik Sansom



2GTC with 3RT in Y2K at DMI

Two Great Train Clubs with Three-rail Trains in Year 2000 at Dearborn, Michigan

by Don M. Carlson (LCCA) and Mike Solly (LOTS)

What could be better than owning and operating Lionel trains? Touring the factory where our favorite toys are made. That's what!

What could be better than a factory tour? Visiting it with lots of people who share the same hobby interest, doodle sketches of a "dream layout" on a restaurant napkin while waiting to be served, attend train shows in the region at every opportunity, and would rather hang out at the local train store than the local tavern. That's what!

Mark your calendar now for an event likely to become your favorite "millennium story" for you to tell your grandchildren about decades from now. Picture yourself as the storyteller of a show-n-tell session that might begin with, "I visited the Lionel factory in the summer of 2000 and saw this very train being made."

This will be the big one. Not only will it be the first joint convention between two national model train clubs; it will also be the millennium celebration of the 100th anniversary of Lionel — all wrapped up in one big party! Lionel has committed its staff and resources full-steam ahead in support for both organizations with this big show. There hasn't been anything like it before, and probably won't be again in our lifetime.

In the fourth week of July 2000, the only two national clubs devoted to Lionel trains — LCCA and LOTS — will hold their first joint Convention in Dearborn, Michigan with operating layouts, activities, seminars, fun events, and tours of area attractions. But the big





attractions for club members will be a guided tour of the Lionel factory in nearby Chesterfield, a visit to the O-gauge layout built by Lionel employees at the Visitor's Center, and a stroll through the Lionel Gift Shop. For train lovers, it'll be like visiting the "Mecca" of trandom.

Other transportation-related attractions in the area include Greenfield Village, the Henry Ford Museum, and the delightful private collection of cars and model trains at the CarRail Museum of Richard Kughn, former President of Lionel Trains.

If the 500 or so tables at the train meet of the Convention won't be enough, we'll also have buses running to one of the top Lionel train stores in America - the new Madison Hardware. Mr. Kughn bought it — lock, stock and barrel at its original location in downtown New York City — and moved it all to Michigan. For hard-core layout lovers, there will be a few layout tour visits on the agenda.

The Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn will be the host hotel, and savvy trainfolk will make their reservations promptly when registration forms are published in February 2000. Plan your summer vacation in 2000 as a great train adventure. You won't want to miss this!

Editor's Note: Don Carlson, Vice President of LCCA, is the co-chairman of the 2000 Joint Convention along with Mike Urban. Mike Solly is the Chairman of LOTS. By cooperative agreement, this same article is published in the December 1999 edition of The Switcher, the club magazine of LOTS.



Christmas '37 Remembered

by Harry Carlson
RM 12390

Last Christmas, I set up around our Christmas tree the first Lionel electric train I received as a boy in 1937. As I installed the tracks and train, I said to my wife that I thought our grandchildren would really get a kick out of seeing my first Lionel electric train.

The holiday arrived, and the children and grandchildren came over for Christmas dinner. As the grandchildren arrived, they made a beeline to the living room to see the Christmas tree and the gifts awaiting them. One by one they looked at the train under the tree.

I told them about the train and the Christmas of '37, but the boys interrupted, "Run the train, Grandpa!" So I let her go, and the streamliner went around the tree. The boys sat on the floor and watched.

Finally, two of the boys stood up, and one asked, "Grandpa, what does the train do?" Then the other one said, "It just goes around and around and doesn't do anything." Before I could respond to their question, they went off to another part of the house to play with their cousins. As they watched the 1700E streamliner run around the track, I remembered the memorable Christmas of '37.

It was three weeks before Christmas, and the winter was very cold and snowy. For a young boy, it was a time of exciting activities: building forts of fresh-fallen snow, staging snowball fights with it, and sledding down hills covered with it. I looked forward to writing a letter to Santa Claus, receiving presents, and eating Christmas cookies at the most wonderful, magical time of the year.

1937 was a slower and quieter time, there was the hope for a better New Year. I was excited and anticipated what Santa would or would not bring me that year. Also at that time, families lived together in close-knit generations, and our house was home to my grandmother, grandfather, aunt, uncle, sister, mother, and father — and me. It was a warm, sometimes difficult, but wonderful time for a young boy to grow up and be touched by so many loving people.



When I came home from school, my grandmother met me at the door, gave me a hug, took me by the hand, brought me inside, and asked if I would like something to eat. In those years, grandmother baked bread

every day, and this day was no exception. The wonderful aroma penetrated the house; it was the best part of coming home.

During that Christmas season, my mother took me out after dinner to visit the local shops. There were no shopping centers at that time. During one outing, we walked down the avenue of shops and came upon the local Lionel train store. I looked through the store window and saw all kinds of trains. I pointed to a big steam engine which I liked and then to another. My mother just smiled. I knew about steam engines then because our home was just a stone's throw from a main rail line, so I had the opportunity to watch many trains pass by. At that time, I had a small wind-up engine, but it wasn't as impressive as the big steam engines in the store window.

That next Saturday morning, I woke up early, looked out the window at all the wonderful snow, and hoped I could go out and play with the sled. But my mother told me that were going downtown to see the Christmas decorations and the store window displays. I didn't realize it at that time, but this was the beginning of an annual holiday tradition — the most wonderful experience of my growing-up years.

It was my first visit to downtown Chicago with my mother. My dad had to work all day on Saturday and could not join us. My mother made sure I was warmly dressed with my winter coat, leggings, stocking cap, large scarf around my neck, mittens, and boots.

We walked to the trolley line that cold Saturday morning and waited for it to arrive. This was the first of three that would take us downtown. As I looked down the street, I saw the trolley slowly coming our way. You always boarded at the rear and left at the front of the car. Mother let me sit next to the window. As I looked out, it started to snow a little, and I thought, "Great, this is going to be a fun time!" It was also the longest trolley ride I had ever taken.



The trolley stopped at just about every corner in those days. It was not very warm inside the car, and I kept wiping the frosted window. As the trolley went down the street, I liked to hear the clang of the bell, which the motorman would ring with his foot over and over again. When we turned on some corners the trolley rod would come off the overhead line, and the car would stop. The conductor would jump out, grab the trolley line and place the rod wheel back on the overhead line. The lights would come on, and we would start moving again. As we proceeded down the line, I noticed that the buildings were getting bigger and taller as we entered the downtown area.

Our trolley stopped in front of a very big department store with windows decorated for the season. The streetlights on both sides of the street were festooned with wreaths and ribbons. Everything glowed brightly on State Street.

We turned the corner of the street and entered a large department store. Inside, Santa's helpers had decorated everything with gold, red, and green decorations and coaxed silver angels from Celestia to come blow their long horns. Christmas music sounded throughout the store. Each department of the store was an adventure with new things to see as people scurried from place to place.

In the early afternoon, my mother suggested we have lunch. We walked to the elevator and went up several floors. When the doors opened, I saw a huge Christmas tree. It looked so tall I imagined it growing through the roof. The tree, covered with silver tinsel, was placed inside the restaurant, and the tables and chairs surrounded it.

As my mother and I sat there through lunch, I felt very special and warmed from within by feelings I never had before — the trip downtown, a great lunch in a restaurant where the holiday season surrounded you and prompted thoughts about Christmas day.

When we finished our lunch, my mother told me that she had a big surprise. We walked from the restaurant back to the elevators. I could not have imagined what I was about to see. The elevator went down and then I heard the operator announce, "Fourth Floor - Toys." The doors opened and for the first time in my life, I saw more toys than I had ever seen before. We walked out onto the floor. I looked to the left and to the right and could not figure out which way to go. It was a dream come true — like entering toy heaven. I rushed from counter to counter. There were games, lead soldiers, wagons, bicycles, model cars, planes, dolls, trucks, building sets. So many toys all in one place.

My mother took my hand and she said, "Let's go see Santa Claus." As we walked, I heard sounds that were familiar — a train whistle and trains going around the track. I pulled at my mother's hand, and moved her along toward the train layout.

The layout was quite large with many Lionel steam engines, big and small, freight and passenger sets. There were also several operating accessories. A steam engine, a passenger train, sounded its whistle and went around and around. I was held by amazement at the edge of the layout. The man who ran the layout showed the children and parents how various accessories and trains worked. It was the greatest "show" I had ever seen. As a steam

engine came around the track toward me, I hoped and wished that Santa would bring me a steam engine like this one on Christmas Day.

I did not realize how much time had passed while I watched the trains in operation. It was the only thing I wanted to see and do that afternoon. I now know that I had the greatest mom a boy could have because she allowed me the time to enjoy this day fully. I felt my mother's hand on my shoulder. She smiled and leaned over to tell me that it was time to go home.

We walked through the store out to State Street late in the afternoon. The cold air felt good as we waited for our trolley to arrive. During our trip home I looked out the window, watched the city go by, and said to myself, "I'll always remember this time and place."

Christmas Eve finally arrived! My grandmother and mother had finished baking cookies, breads, and other Christmas treats for that big day. We all enjoyed our dinner that night, especially the cookies.

That night, the longest night of the year, my mother came to my room to tuck me in and say good night. I asked if Santa would bring me an electric train. My mother smiled and told me I would have to wait until morning to see what Santa would bring.

It was a very long night, and sleep did not come easily. I awoke early that morning. Everyone else in the house was still sleeping, but I went directly to the living room. Under the Christmas tree sitting on shiny new tracks was a red and chrome passenger train with three cars and an engine. I didn't know at the time that it was a Lionel 1700E set, but I knew it was my train.

I laid on the floor and looked at this wonderful train. After a while, I took the engine, and pulled the train down the track a little way. I realized I didn't know how to start or run this train. Well, it didn't take me long to figure out my next move — get dad. I got up and turned around, and mom and dad were standing there. They saw the joy in my face, as I said, "Look what Santa brought me!" Before my dad could move, I was pulling on his arm to show me how to operate my new electric train.

That morning and throughout the day, I ran the train around and around the tree. At some point, dad came in, turned off the train and said it was time for Christmas dinner. After dinner, I was back on the floor and running my train. Some time later, my dad came in again and told me I had to go to bed. I gave the train one more turn around the track and shut it down.

That night, as I lay in my bed, I thought about all the things that happened during that Christmas season. Fresh in my mind was Christmas Day and my Lionel electric train. I'll always remember that wonderful, magical Christmas.

Suddenly, I heard voices calling, "Grandpa, Grandpa!" I looked up and saw my grandsons, Nicholas and Kevin. They said, "Come on Grandpa, let's go downstairs and run the real trains." I let the old 1700E streamliner go around the tree just one more time. I smiled and thought, "the magic is still here."



Think Big, Go Public

by Dennis Moore

RM 16636

The Making of a Christmas Train Garden

As the Christmas season came to mind in mid-1998, my thoughts turned to construction of a train garden, a local Baltimore term for a seasonal train layout. I had recently moved and taken down my year-round layout in the basement. Instead of constructing another layout in my new basement (which was still full of moving boxes), I decided to design and construct a train garden (see diagram) for public display during the '98 holiday season.

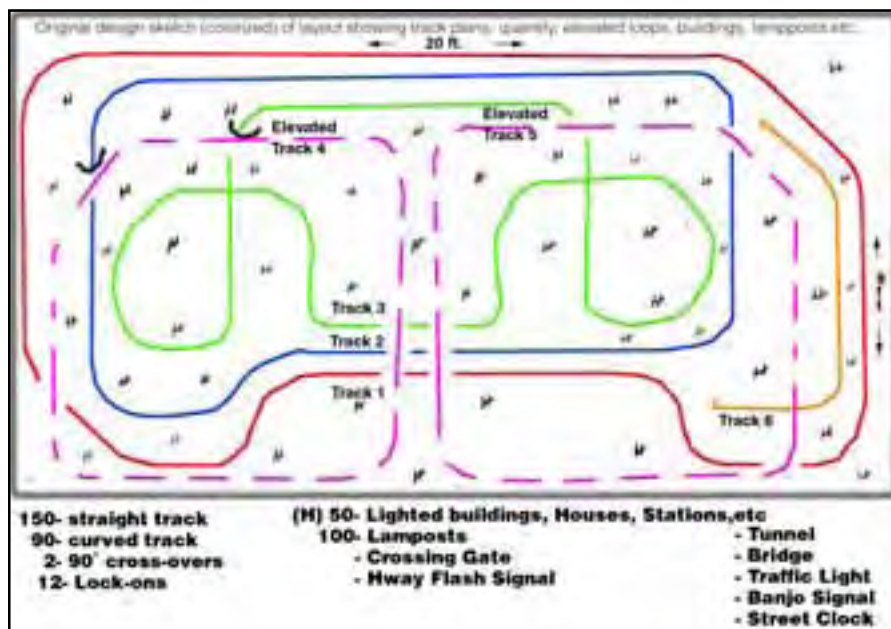
I wrote to various organizations and received a positive response from Natilie Swirdovich, Mall Manager/Marketing Director for Chatham Mall, a 310,000 square foot enclosed facility in Ellicott City, Maryland, population 50,000. The mall has 20 stores including K-Mart, Caldor, and Giant Food, and it expected to have 10,000 shoppers during the Christmas season. Natilie thought the train garden idea would complement the mall's existing "All Aboard!" train club for kids, a seasonal train ride installed in the mall for enjoyment by youngsters.

After several discussions, we settled on an 8x20-foot layout in a storefront across from the train ride and the stage for Santa Claus. It was October 24, 1998, and Natilie asked if the layout could be up and running for Santa's predicted arrival on November 21, just four weeks away. It's not nice to say "No" to Santa.

I had already written to 80 suppliers asking for train donations including: building materials, trains (3-rail, O gauge), rolling stock, track, transformers, electronics, operating accessories, lights, lamp posts, houses, figures, vehicles, scenery, etc. The donations enabled me to build

and operate the layout for the pleasure and benefit of visitors. No fee was charged, and the donations were prominently noted on the layouts and in all advertising.

After personally speaking to over 30 suppliers, I garnered the support of several for this project. MTH contributed most of the materials: trains, track, transformers, buildings, lamp posts, operating accessories, and environmental sounds. Other donations came from JoAnn Fabrics in Columbia (snow blanket), Life-Like Products in Baltimore (figures, landscaping material) and Die Cast Direct in Frankfort, Kentucky (vehicles).



The large layout was first constructed in the basement of my home, then disassembled and transported to the mall for re-assembly and finishing touches. I used half-inch Homasote with a wooden frame glued around the outside edges for protection. The layout rested on

2x4x8-foot wooden sawhorse assemblies set 40 inches above the ground. Chest latches secured the five 4x8-foot sections of Homasote together and formed one 8x20-foot total assembly. 18-gauge wire was used throughout the layout for all electrical connections. RealTrax™ was easy to assemble, and its unique connections on both ends of each sectional track allowed for design flexibility without removing or inserting track pins.

The layout featured five continuously operating trains: a smoking steam engine freight set, a streamline diesel engine passenger set, a diesel engine construction set, and two trolleys. The track plan took the trains over, under, and across each other. There were 50 illuminated buildings, 100 lamp posts, and 20 operating accessories. Four transformers at 400 watts each powered the layouts. Detail scenes were created with 60 Life-Like figures that were walking, working, playing, or sitting all over the layout. Other accessories added interest and detail to the



layout: barnyard animals, telephone poles, cars, and signs.

The entire layout was covered with sparkling snow and hundreds of snow-covered evergreens. A Sinclair gas station operating accessory featured a 1957 Chevy that drove out of the garage bay as that door rolled up and stopped at the gas pumps for fueling. Afterwards, it returned to the garage and the door closed. American flags fluttered in the wind and crossing gates came down when the trains passed. Different environmental sounds emerged from the corners of the layout. Listening closely, one could hear the night sounds of crickets and frogs, a passenger conductor announcing "All Abooooooooooard!" at the station, stormy weather sounds, and oceanside waves crashing on a nearby but invisible beach.

More than 10,000 people visited the Christmas Train Garden at Chatham Mall during last year's holiday season. It was open seven days a week from November 21 to January 8 during the 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. normal business hours of the mall. Many visitors saw the train hobby on display at the time of year when nostalgic memories about toy trains are at a peak.

More than 1,000 visitors (including the former Howard County Executive, Chuck Ecker, and his family) signed the train garden guest books. Here are some of their comments:

"Neato, wonderful"

"Haven't seen one this nice in years"

"It truly added to our Christmas memories"

"Our three-year-old was in train heaven"

"I like to Choo Choo"

"What a wonderful idea"

"Great idea, quality trains"

"Very nice, we had to drag ourselves away"

"What a great way to enjoy the holiday"

"Stopped by mall for a quick errand and ended up stayed hours because of the trains"

"Brought back lots of memories"

"Big hit with the kids"

"Incredible, what a treat"

"I'm going out and buy some trains now"

"Hope to see it next year"

"All train gardens are magical"

"Interesting sound effects"

"Very realistic, should sell them here too"

"Very realistic trolley."

More than 4,000 brochures telling about the trains and where to buy them were distributed to the visitors. The 1957 Chevy at the gas station drove in and out of the service bay and filled up with gas over 25,000 times. Only normal lubrication and cleaning maintenance were required during this eight-week period.

I constructed the layout for semi-portable operation.

After a brief maintenance period and conversion to spring/summer/fall scenery, I took the layout on the road to various public locations throughout the year. It will be on display and in operation at Chatham Mall for the Christmas season in 1999. If you're in the neighborhood, come on by!



Over 10,000 people visited the train garden at the mall, and many came back several times. Toy trains created a magical ambiance despite this Nintendo age.





Build it, and they will come. The Chatham Mall sign told the story of a wonder within.



The layout was test-built in the basement, and this work-in-progress shot shows the near-beginning of the train garden enterprise.



Passenger trains of C&O and Santa Fe passed on the mainline tracks at the depot.

Moms and dads enjoyed the trains, and the boy seems to be thinking, "Will they let me trade-in my Game Boy for an electric toy train?"



The gas station operating accessory was a big hit with over 25,000 activations.

Photos by Dennis Moore



At Trackside

LCCA Members in Action

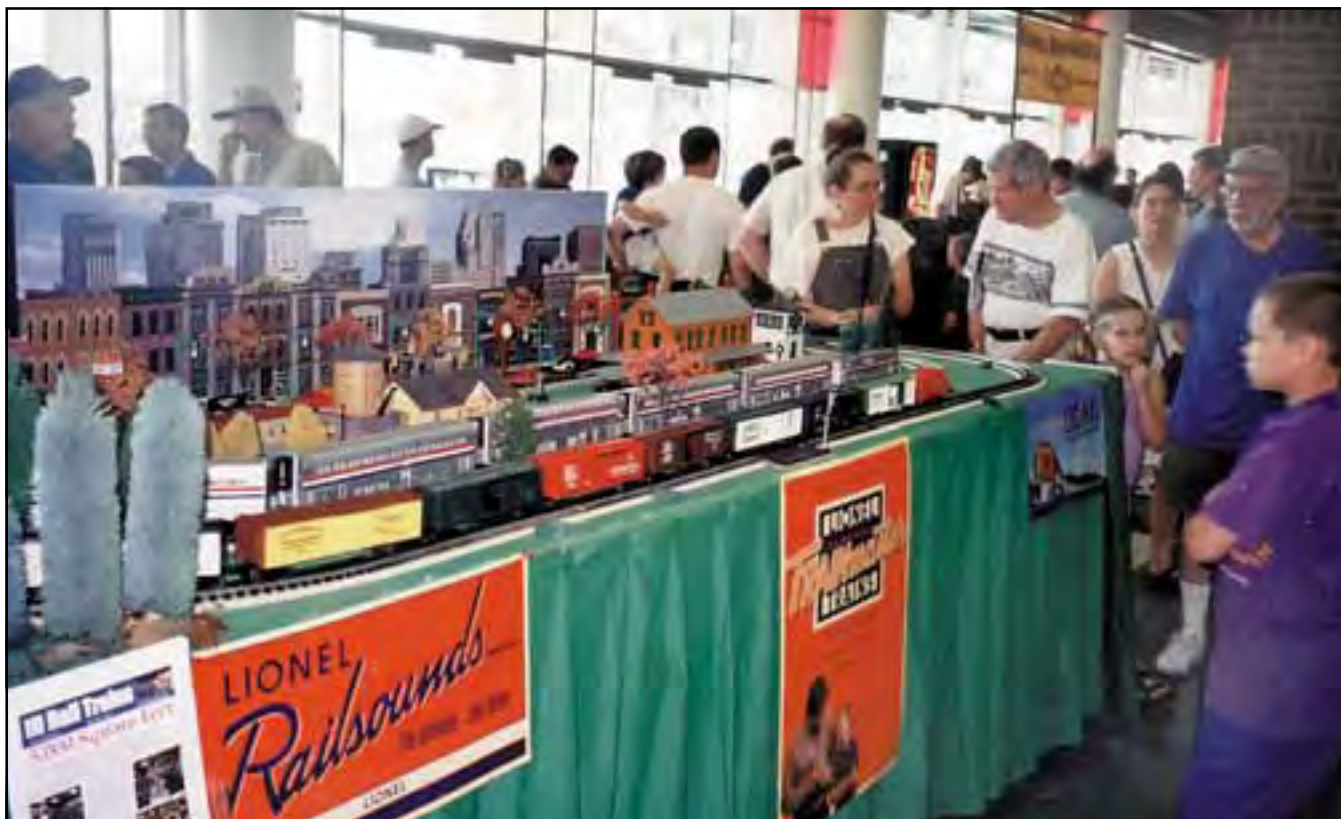
Chad Kono (RM 16794) and friends “invaded” the National Model Railroad Association’s 1999 National Show in St. Paul, Minnesota. He was one of the few three-rail exhibitors in an event traditionally dominated by HO and N scale trains. Chad’s layout was a substitute for the traveling layout of Lionel LCC and was sponsored by III Rail Trains in Coon Rapids, Minnesota, a hobby shop specializing in O gauge trains.

There were two other O gauge layouts at the show, one of which was the huge layout by the Chicago O Gauge Train Club. That large modular layout is a popular attraction often presented in the mid-west at train shows and malls. The layout won a NMRA award for excellence.

A special feature of Chad’s layout was the prototype of Lionel’s new ZW transformer; this show was the first time the unit was extensively tested in the field and it worked superbly. The operating crew included LCCA members Mike Helde and George Flury.



Chad monitors the train action at the controls of the new Lionel ZW transformer.



Chad's layout attracted a lot of attention during the three-day St. Paul NMRA show in July.

Photos by Chad Kono





When preparing trackside scenery, think of an individual scene and then imagine yourself in that environment. In the scene above, who has the best view — the swimmer, the fly fisherman, or the passengers in the D&RGW Zephyr?

Lots of Action in a Small Space

Mike Tripp (RM 639) shared these photos taken of the layout of his late friend, Ira Butler, prior to taking it down and placing it in storage. These scenes are shelf-like environments no deeper than 18 inches. The level of detail invites the imagination to go beyond make believe and enter a nearly real train world.



Surrounded by realistic scenery and details, the Lionel #364 Lumber Mill seems to come to life. With vehicles and figures in logical places, the Mill sizzles with action.



The Santa Fe "El Capitan" E8 enters into daylight from a tunnel that suggests a mountain range in Colorado or New Mexico.

Photos by Mike Tripp



Bringing Home the Bacon to Alabama

At a special event in Mobile, Alabama, in early September, the LCCA and other members of the South West Alabama Railroad Modelers (SWARM) club captured media attention, along with U.S. Rep. Sonny Callahan (R-Mobile), and raised public awareness for an important local railroad historic preservation and renovation project.

At an outdoor ceremony in front of the former GM&O railroad terminal, the community honored their Congressman for securing \$10.5 million in federal funds to renovate the historic structure. "My daddy and my grandfather actually worked for the GM&O as a switchman and a conductor respectively," he said, "and at one time, my brother and I lived only two blocks from here."

The city of Mobile contributed \$2.2 million to the project to transform the building into a transportation terminal for buses, taxis, limousines, and a possible downtown trolley.

The city welcomed SWARM's offer to set up their O gauge modular layout as a focal point of the ceremony and placed it right up front for all to see and enjoy. The local newspaper covered the event, published a large photo of the layout in action at the top of the news article, and reported: "Out in front of the dilapidated building, the Southwest Alabama Railroad Modelers set up model trains of the GM&O and Amtrak. With the Gumbo Bay Jazz Band and the Azalea Trail Maids, the circa-1907 building saw its most exciting day Tuesday since the short-lived effort to turn it into a casino some years back."



U.S. Congressman Callahan describes the GM&O terminal renovation project to a local crowd during a recognition ceremony in Mobile, Alabama. The SWARM O gauge layout was placed in the foreground.



Phillip Kotheimer operated the trains on the modular layout before, during, and after the ceremony.

By active engagement in this event, club members connected public fascination with trains and local interest in the legacy of a fallen flag to the history and growth of the train hobby.



The 90-plus years old GM&O terminal, dramatic in design but obviously needing renovation, will become a transportation hub for the city.

Photos by George Nelson

Decades of Layouts

by Ron Morris

RM 3060

A Christmas Photo Essay

The holiday season is “train time” for many club members who annually install a modular or rug-runner layout at the base of the Christmas tree. At Morris Station, I revive memories from decades past and create new ones in the present and for the future with O gauge and standard gauge trains. For many 50 and 60-something club members, the original and un-restored B&W photos may evoke memories of our boyhood fascination with toy trains. My holiday train display shows continuity and change, tradition and progress.



At Christmas in 1986, the trains dutifully performed freight chores and provided passenger service to commuters.



In 1973, a Lionel #51 chugged merrily around the Christmas tree.





In 1990, my Christmas layout surrounded the tree and offered running room for two trains. The “blue sky” effect stretched the landscape beyond the hills.



Pooky Bear (a.k.a. Fur Ball) explored the local geography of Lionel City in 1990 and looked in vain for a Ralston Purina building and a daily ration of cat chow.



At Christmas 1990, standard gauge (at right) and O gauge (at left) trains met at Reading Station, just one track away from “nearby” Ives City. Note the festive wreath on the boiler front of the train in the foreground.





This 1994 view shows the house plots to great advantage along Lionel Boulevard. Standard gauge trains ran on the outer loop with O gauge trains on the inner loop.



The "hill country" section of the 1994 layout added drama to a flatland rug layout.



Living in a new home in 1994, I installed an 8x15-foot layout at the base of the tree and set the trains in motion.



The layout installation for the holiday season of 1996 included my standard gauge steamer in passenger service on its way to the big bend at Blue Chair Curve.

Photos by Ron Morris



Generations

by Grandpa Nelson G. Williams

RM 14062

Kids and trains at Christmas

Editor's Note: Many can trace the legacy of toy trains back to their childhood and some maybe even farther back in time. LCCA's grandfather in residence traces the history of his family's involvement with toy trains back 100 years.

About six years ago, I bought a T-reproduction of the 3-1/4 inch gauge Buddy L work train. My grandchildren were the first of more than 50 kids to ride on that train. They are too big for it today, but in **photo 1** Cheryl (age 9) and Alex Chaky (age 12) took the seats on the gondola and hopper that I built for them as young children. Robyn Chaky (now 15) is as tall as I am, and she sits on the chair.



Grandson Ricky Rector was only four months old when we played with this large scale Lionel passenger set during his first visit to Grandpa's house in the spring of 1990. The hat and bandana on Ricky suggest a promising future for this young toy train engineer. His



Photos provided by Grandpa Nelson Williams



Aunt Elizabeth Williams, who took **photo 2**, decorated the Christmas tree on my layout that year.

At Christmas time, Grandson Ricky Hans Nelson Rector (now age 9) played with the Standard Gauge Lionel freight set presented to me and my brothers at a long-ago Christmas (1937) from our father, Grandpa Nelson II. Our dad got his first train, an Ives, in about 1905 from his mother's adoptive father, Dr. H.W. Nelson, known in the family as Grandpa Nelson I. The first train Ricky played with at age four months, the large scale Lionel passenger set shown in the photo above, is running here in **photo 3** at left on the inside loop of the layout. Ricky is six generations removed from Grandpa Nelson I, yet nearly a century later the legacy of toy trains remains as fascinating as ever. May it always be so.



News from Lionel

Lenny Dean Appointed

Lionel LLC has appointed Lenny Dean to the position of Marketing Consultant. In this new position, Dean will be involved in research and advising the marketing department while representing Lionel at Industry trade shows. Dean's first public appearance was at York, Pennsylvania in mid-October.

"We are honored to have Lenny return to Lionel in time for our centennial celebration," said Richard N. Maddox, President of Lionel. "His history with Lionel, expertise and love for toy trains is truly an asset to Lionel."



Lenny Dean

Dean was employed with Lionel for over 55 years, and is an active member of the LCCA (RM 8104) and the three other O-gauge-oriented train clubs - LOTS, TCA, and TTOS. "It feels good to be back at Lionel," Dean said, "and I'm looking forward to seeing many familiar faces in the near future."

Wanted

Stories and photographs about LCCA members and their Lionel layouts and activities and articles about Lionel history and toy train production.

Mike Mottler, RM 12394
Editor, *The Lion Roars*
mottlerm@conwaycorp.net

Upcoming LCCA Events

April 2, 2000 Clinton, Tennessee

Gary Lape (423) 457-8387 will be the Host of a Toy Train Show at the Tennessee National Guard Armory at 185 Yarnell Industrial Parkway in Clinton, Tennessee on Saturday and Sunday, April 1-2, 2000. LCCA members may trade from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday, and the show will be open to guests and the public thereafter from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$3 for guests and \$5 for families. Tables are \$8. Accommodations are available nearby. For more information, contact: Gary Lapes, P.O. Box 853, Clinton, TN 37717.

July 1, 2000 Chattanooga, Tennessee

Bill Stitt will be the Host of a Train Meet Saturday, July 1, 2000, in Chattanooga, Tennessee. It will be held at the East Ridge Retirement Centre (formerly the Days Inn) at 1400 North Mack Road (I-75 Exit #1) in Chattanooga. LCCA trading is available to members from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. and the public will be welcomed from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Registration and set-up will take place from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Tables are \$10 with no limit. Admission for a guest is \$5; for families, \$7. Bill Stitt may be reached by mail at 9727 Shadow Valley Circle, Chattanooga, TN 37421; or by phone at 423-894-1284.

July 23-30, 2000 30th Annual Convention Dearborn, Michigan

Mark your calendar now for this date in the year 2000 for the joint LCCA-LOTS Convention. Look for additional details in future Club publications.

Meet Hosts Wanted!
Contact John Fisher
(651) 454-6644



The Mane Line

by Dennis Leon Clad

RM 10430

I don't mind telling you that being a Lionel purist and fedora wearer, I've felt somewhat out of place in today's baseball cap society. It would seem that class and style, even loyalty, was passe. Little did I know that I would soon meet a gentleman whose enthusiasm for the world's greatest toy trains would re-ignite the boiler fire of Lionel excitement in me.

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With that ambassadorial introduction, let's look at some genuine Lionel uncataloged rolling stock. For the benefit of new readers of "The Mane Line," here's the official definition of genuine Lionel uncataloged rolling stock as given by Lionel's Head of Sales, Bob Ryder. It is a toy made and painted by Lionel using virgin materials and issued a Lionel production (SKU) number, but the car does not appear in a Lionel catalog.

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collectors. Start dropping hints now to your loved ones so they can arrange a Christmas morning surprise for you with this Wheaties boxcar 6-26257 priced at \$69.95, item 0227.



To my surprise, Betty Crocker still has Cheerios boxcar 6-26215 in stock, item 1056, for \$69.95. Call Betty at 612-479-4980.



The Smuckers Hot Fudge tank car 7-99007, item CYB0003 is \$56.00; only 1,500 tank cars were made.



The Smuckers Apple Butter boxcar 6-26220, item SYI0002 is only \$48.00; only 1,000 were made. Call (800) 742-6729 to place an order. Be sure to ask about the shipping cost.



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Our next car is sure to be sold out by the time you read this because the number available for sale was quite low. 6-26750 is the first Lionel car to honor “The Great Miniature



Railroad and Village.” Lionel is the 1999 corporate sponsor of this toy train wonderland. Four hundred boxcars were produced as a fundraiser for this layout exhibit at the Carnegie Science Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The cars are sold in the museum gift shop.

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Quaker Oats promotional set owners and Lionel collectors everywhere — get ready for a very special uncataloged add-on car: 6-26278, the Captain Crunch 1999 Christmas boxcar. This instant collectible has everything going for it — limited sales to Quaker Oats employees, a short July ’99 order date, great colors, a 3-D effect with the shadow lettering, and split-second name recognition. 180 fewer cars were made than sets. Finally, it appeals to more than one collector group. Bill Davies (RM 24468), you made your teacher proud. The best place to start your search for the Captain Crunch boxcar is a want ad in the LCCA’s Interchange Track. I would not be surprised to see this item escalate in value to the \$400-\$600 range — it’s that great.

As long as we’re on the subject of Lionel uncataloged collectibles, I would be remiss not to mention the Lionel Monopoly Steam Express Set offered by the Eastwood



Company. This set was sold in three parts. The first part of this eye-catching train arrived in eager collector hands last fall and consisted of four Lionel cars: 6-52161, a red Lionel caboose, 6-52160, the Water Works tank car, 6-52158, Mint car, and 6-52159, the Electric Company transformer car.

Printed on the bottom side of the transformer car is the text: “Lionel Division.” Sad to say, all 1,500 sets of the first four cars are sold out, but some can still be found reasonably priced on the secondary market.

The second set of four Monopoly cars is every bit as breathtaking as the first set. The good news is, as I write this column, set two is still available from Eastwood for



The 30-year w

Announcing the Third Decade LCCA Locomotive and Caboose

Every ten years, the club sponsors the production of a steam or diesel locomotive to pull the nine annual club cars offered during the preceding decade. In the year 2000, we celebrate the 30th anniversary of LCCA and the 100th anniversary of Lionel — the century's pre-eminent trainmaker — and the millennium. This SD-40 is a special collectible because of our history and its unique decoration. There won't ever be another locomotive like it.



wait is over, bu

“LCCA Lines” Design with a One-of-a-kind Production Process

Lionel will make the locomotive and its companion caboose to LCCA specifications based on the company’s popular SD-40 model. Jim Bunte, now CEO of American Eagle Entertainment and formerly a Lionel LLC design executive, created the decoration especially for LCCA.

The plastic body shell is plated with real metal and then overlaid with blue-tinted, translucent Platinum Mist paint applied by a gradient technique — heavier at the top of the hood and then lighter and still lighter down the sides. This

special effect fades completely away just above the frame so that a portion of the initial metal plating is intentionally revealed. After the lettering and distinctive logos are applied, the entire body shell receives an application of clear-coat finish as a protective coating against oxidation and fingerprints. The decoration is sealed in time forever.

This artfully applied finish generates subtle color shifting as the play of light seems to change the hue from light blue to steel blue to ice blue to silver blue. This décor scheme will not be applied to any other train, and Lionel has assured the club that this will not be duplicated



ut worth it - to

on any of its other products. It will remain a prized collectible as distinctive as the millennium year and the centennial of Lionel.

Take a Look "Under the Hood"

This SD-40 locomotive has the top-of-the-line features you'd expect in a once-in-a-decade special product:

- Dual Pullmor™ motors
- Command Control™ Equipped
- Railsounds™
- TowerCom™ & Crew Talk™
- Magne-Traction™
- Die-cast trucks
- Metal frame and Electrocouplers
- Metal handrails

- Detailed body, pilots, and fuel tank
- Headlight
- Oscillating ditch lights
- Minimum radius: 0-31

The matching caboose is an extended vision model with illumination.

This Special Limited Edition Is Made Affordable with Three Installments

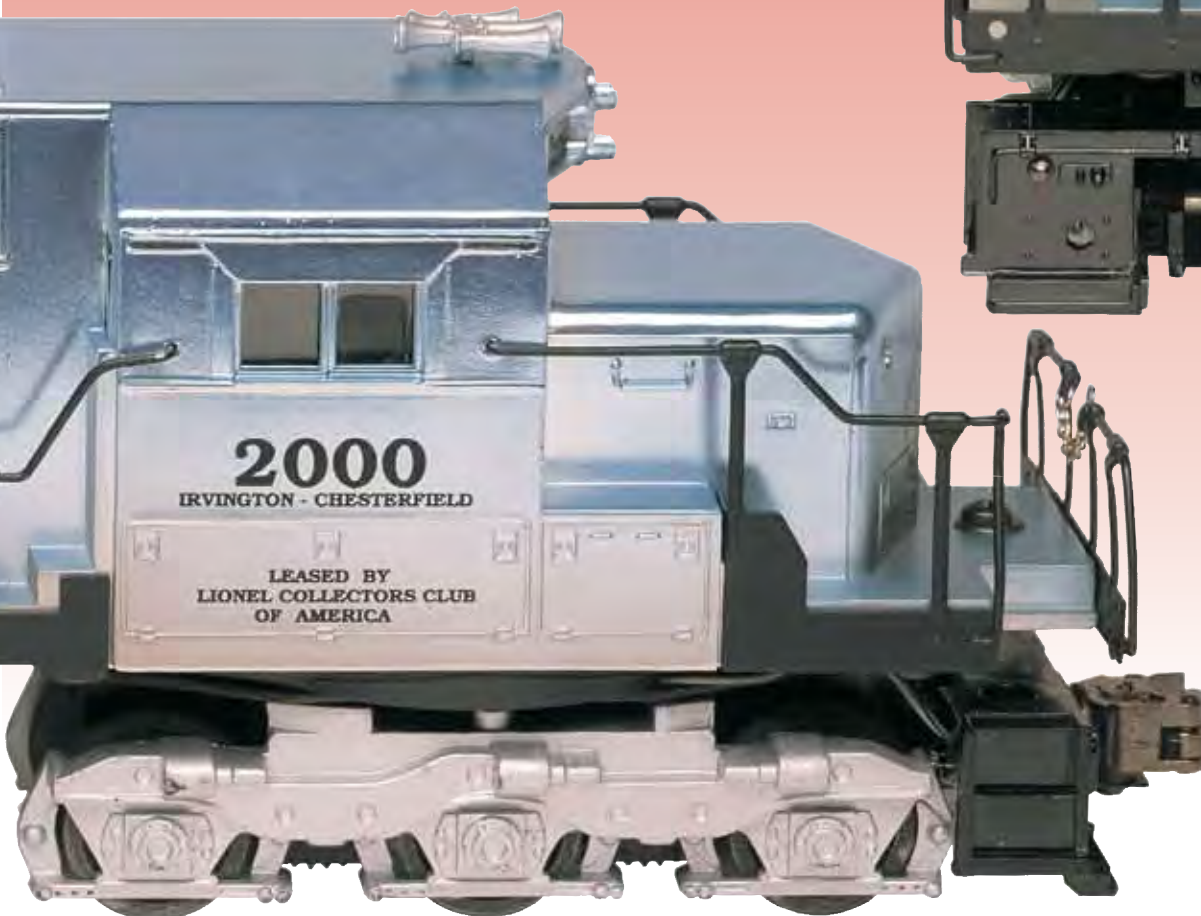
The number of units manufactured will be the actual number of units ordered by LCCA members, so this locomotive and caboose will be limited to the



o own these.

initial purchasers. This two-piece set will be sold ONLY as a pair for \$675 plus sales tax (if applicable), S&H, and insurance. Payment may be made up front in full OR in three installments. Installment payments will be recorded as received. The locomotive and caboose sets will be shipped to purchasers on or about September 1, 2000.

Failure to make any installment(s) will result in forfeiture of all payments. No refunds. Limit: two sets per member.



Products
shown
actual
size

The Mane Line

by Dennis Leon Clad

RM 10430

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Order Form

(This form may be photocopied)

The Third Decade LCCA Locomotive and Caboose Deadline for ordering is February 1, 2000

Member name: _____ LCCA Member No. _____

Charter Member Regular Member Family Member LOTS Member

Items will be sent by UPS. Because that company doesn't deliver to P.O. boxes, a street address is required.

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip + 4: _____

Payment menu:

Up front

Installments

Payment in full - \$675.00 (1), \$1350.00 (2)

If a MI resident, add 6% sales tax (\$40.50 MI sales tax, each)

Payment in installments:

\$250.00 on or before February 1, 2000; \$500.00 (2)

\$225.00 on or before April 1, 2000; \$450.00 (2)

\$200.00 or before June 1, 2000; \$400.00 (2)

If a MI resident, add 6% sales tax (\$40.50 MI sales tax, each)

on or before June 1, 2000

Shipping, handling, and insurance: \$12.00 base cost each

Additional S&H for foreign delivery

If Canada, add'l \$6.00 each

If Alaska or Hawaii, add'l \$8.00 each

If other foreign country, add'l \$12.00 each

TOTAL:

\$ _____ or \$ _____

For credit card purchase, please fill-in the lines below.

MASTERCARD, VISA, or DISCOVER,

Card No. _____ Expires: _____

Signature _____

By my signature, I authorize LCCA to charge my account for the amount indicated.

Enclose payment (in U.S. funds) for this offer only and mail to:

LCCA, P.O. Box 479, LaSalle, IL 61301-0479.

Make check or money order payable to: LCCA.

Do not combine this order with LCCA dues or any other payment to the club. Do not send cash by mail.

Lionel News and Views

by Bill Schmeelk

RM 6643

More on the Sound Dispatch Station

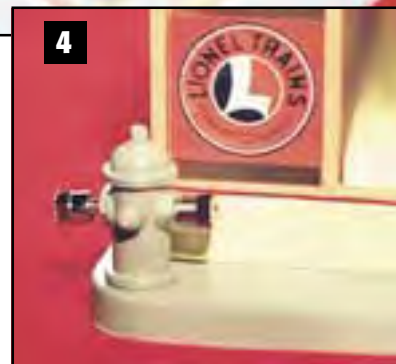
Three members called to confirm that the roofs of their postwar 465 Sound Dispatch Stations also had the silver sticker, originally designed for the trolley. I also spoke with Lionel's Paul Condeelis, a Lionel engineer who works on accessories. He offered a few more points about the new Sound Dispatch Station. Paul advised that all of the tooling for the latest version was new. One of the challenges they faced was reproducing the window insert. Finding an original in which the colors had not faded or changed proved an impossible task, so extra efforts were made to faithfully reproduce the look of the original when it was first produced. The result was outstanding, and the time of Paul and his co-workers was well spent. The new insert significantly adds to the nostalgic look of the station. Producing it on plastic instead of paper will ensure that this look will last for many years. I also asked Paul about some other favorite accessories. Although Paul couldn't confirm anything specific, he certainly led me to believe that all would be pleased when the new Toy Fair catalog comes out.

Lionel's Ambassador Conference

Lionel held its second Ambassador Conference this past September in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The conference headquarters was the Carnegie Science Center, which also had a large array of scientific exhibits and an operating, large Lionel layout. Over 60 ambassadors attended the conference. Once again, Lionel brought a large staff and presented a sneak preview of products included in the new Volume 3 1999 Catalog. The festivities started on Thursday night when the ambassadors enjoyed a personal tour of the center's large Lionel layout. The evening was topped off with a magic show, and all had a good time. Neil Young was there and enjoyed the festivities. For many ambassadors, this was their first chance to meet and talk with Lionel's new President, Richard N. Maddox, see **photo 1**. In the center's theater, he discussed Lionel's direction for the future. Lionel staffers



presented production information. **Photo 2** shows Ken Sylvestri, Bob Grubba, Eric Shreffler, and Paul Condeelis described new products. Engineer Bob Grubba discussed some of Lionel's new tooling and locomotives. In what has become his trademark of "show and tell," he passed the items among us for closer examination. For the new Big Boy we saw one of the first shots from the new tooling. Paul showed us the new Lionel Factory accessory and practically dared us to try to damage it.



This new item is very sturdily built. Another new accessory displayed was the Lionel Hobby Shop. This very detailed 1950s-style hobby shop actually has three small operating layouts inside. The interior has all sorts of goodies, even miniature reproductions of Lionel catalog covers. There's lots of action too. **Photo 3** shows a top view of the hobby shop with its windowed roof removed. A lot of work went into this one. Check out **photo 4** for the unique terminal connections.





As you might have expected, Lionel is releasing a second version of their new Hellgate Bridge in the red, ivory, and silver paint scheme originally introduced in 1935. This new Hellgate Bridge shown in **photo 5** is almost identical to the first version; it was a complete sellout. There is one small difference. When the green version of the bridge is operated with Command Control, the power connections for the light cannot be common grounded with the rest of the layout. Doing so will adversely affect Command control operation. The new one has resolved this problem by isolating the lighting circuit connections from the bridge itself. The solution is apparently simple to retrofit to the green bridge. This new version also has an accompanying boxcar in matching colors. See **photo 6**.



While I was walking from the hotel to a restaurant for dinner, I passed an interesting display on the street. We all know that Pittsburgh was once the steel-making capital of the world. As it turns out, the American Bridge Company of Pittsburgh built the Hellgate Bridge. **Photo 7** is an actual section of the Hellgate Bridge. **Photo 8** is the plaque describing this section, which was apparently used in a display at the time to tout the technology of its design.

Also attending the conference were Richard and Linda Kughn. Richard gave one of the presentations, and

it was great to see that Lionel is taking full advantage of his knowledge of and love for Lionel trains. Tom Blishock gave an enthusiastic presentation of Lionel's direction in the coming years. Tom went on to explain some of the changes in production that have enhanced the quality of Lionel products. I've previously reported in TLR the changes in the new Commodore and the fine points of the new Texas Special. One change that is already obvious — Lionel has reduced the time between announcing a product and getting it to market. The new Big Boy is a perfect example of this. First announced in October, the new giant loco will be shipped in December.

Lionel on the Top Ten List

The Arts and Entertainment cable TV network has a show that features the top ten of something each week.



Previous programs have featured the top ten automobiles and the top ten TV commercials. A recent show featured the top ten toys. Lionel was ranked number four on the list and beat out such toys as Erector sets, Hot Wheels, Lincoln Logs, the Frisbie, Slinky, and Playdoh. One of the reasons given for including Lionel on the list was — it's a toy



that you never outgrow. Don't we know it! The three toys that beat Lionel on the list were — Barbie (number three), Crayola Crayons (number two), and finally — in the number one position — the Yo-Yo.

Lionel's New Catalog

Lionel's new Volume 3 1999 Catalog gives a clear picture of the direction Lionel is going to pursue in the next millennium. This new catalog came out just at deadline for this issue. By the time you receive this issue,



many of you will already have seen this catalog. So I won't list all the items, but I'll add some information and make some comments. The biggest news is the Lionel Big Boy. **Photo 9** shows an operating production prototype. Lionel's Bob Grubba mentioned that the actual production model would have even more detail added to it. The special RailSounds™ 4.0 will feature chugging that is synchronized independently to each set of eight drivers. The price on this behemoth is a nickel short of \$1500. Since Lionel will be shipping this loco in December, the production numbers have been set. Need I say more? If you're interested in this loco, the safe bet is to talk to your dealer now.

In the past, I've mentioned prices but not commented on them because pricing is a matter for each collector to decide for himself. With this new catalog however, there are some definite changes in Lionel's pricing policy, and this deserves some comment. I'm sure that with this new policy, more collectors and operators will see added value in Lionel products. Combine this with Lionel's quality and it's a match hard to beat. The new Dash 9 locos are a perfect example. The Traditional version, Command and RailSounds upgradeable, lists for \$299.95!

This includes a fan-driven smoke unit, die-cast trucks, pilot and couplers, and dual can motors with flywheels. For another hundred bucks, the Command version features RailSounds™, TowerCom™, CrewTalk™, Electrocouplers™, and directional lighting. As if that weren't enough for the extra \$100, Lionel is also including for a limited time, a CAB-1 Remote, a TrainMaster™ Command Base, and the O Gauge Railroading Video Guide — all at no additional cost. I reviewed this video some time ago and found it worthwhile to watch. If you're new to Command Control, this video will be a big help getting you up and running. So for the total list price of \$399.95 you get the whole package — quite an amazing deal. Lionel is gambling that once you try the Command Control system, you'll find it hard to resist. If you've never taken the plunge, here's a chance to do it at Lionel's expense. If you have already taken the plunge, here's a chance to get an extra



CAB-1 and Command base in addition to the video, all at no cost. Not only that, this new loco is being offered in three different road names. You'll also be pleased with the many fine details Lionel has added to this scale loco. **Photo 10** shows the Santa Fe version, and **photo 11** shows the Amtrak design. The third model is in the BNSF road name.





12



13



14

The TrainMaster package with the video is also being offered with a set that includes a Command Control baby Hudson, a special TrainMaster boxcar and a Visitor's Center car of Lionel's choice. The set is available in either New York Central or Santa Fe and sells for \$549.95. The boxcar is only available in this set.

Some time ago, Lionel promised the FT diesel. It was eventually cancelled, but has now returned with slightly different specs. Originally this loco was to have been powered by Lionel's new Odyssey motor. Dual can motors will power this version. The FT was a shorter loco than the F-3, and this is reflected in Lionel's model as well. The same loco is offered in three different road

names, and matching B units are available as a separate sale add-on. I had a chance to look closely at one of these, and I was impressed with the molded-in details. **Photo 12** is one of the production prototypes.

As a companion for the FT and other locos, Lionel is releasing a new line of streamliner passenger cars. **Photo 13** shows a New York Central vista dome and **photo 14** shows a Santa Fe observation car. These cars were specifically designed for smaller layouts. They are molded plastic and have a surprising amount of detail. Even the interiors have seats, staircases and lavatories. Sold in sets of four, they are initially being offered in four different road names: B&O, New York Central, Santa Fe, and Alaska. Each set consists of a baggage car, a coach car, a vista dome car and an observation car. The price is \$199.95 per set of four.

Lionel's new catalog offers us a taste of what we can expect as Lionel enters its second hundred years. By the time you receive this, it won't be more than another month or so before Lionel's new Toy Fair catalog will be out. By next issue we'll know.

Previously Announced Products

Photo 15 shows the production release of the Platinum Ghost F-3. Here you can see how the platinum plating actually looks. This set was a complete sell-out. Another sell-out was the Texas Special set and its matching aluminum passenger cars. **Photo 16** shows a production prototype of the vista dome passenger car in that series. Lionel took great pains to ensure that the painted metal on the car would match the painted plastic on the loco shell.

Just when you might have given up hope, Lionel recently displayed the prototypes for the Phantom passenger cars. **Photos 17 and 18** show two of the new cars: a coach and a dome car. These new passenger cars are expected to be out early next year.





In the next issue, I hope to have a complete review of the new ZW transformer. Lionel has actually started shipping these out. I'll put one through its paces and report the results here. Until then, here's wishing you all a very happy and train-filled holiday season. See you in the next millennium.

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The Tinplate Cannonball

by Ken Morgan

RM 12231

Victory at E...

“And now, Victory at E” Quick, anybody know where that title came from? If that’s too easy, who was the narrator of the original?

After my brief sojourn in Grandpa Nelson’s world of big trains, I’m back to the world of prewar O gauge. Have you ever tried to overhaul a Lionel E-unit? I once thought it was a pain in some portion of my anatomy. Depending upon my frustration level at the moment, the location of the pain varied!

But at least you **can** work on an E-unit. The new stuff is strictly throw away; if it doesn’t work, just replace the board. That’s a great time saver, but poor economics. The E-unit has parts you can buy or repair. Of course, fitting them back together is another matter. Hence, the aforementioned pain.

If you believe an E-unit is hard to work with, try their Lionel predecessor, the pendulum reverse unit. Now there’s a device with absolutely no redeeming social value! OK, maybe a miniscule amount, if you consider that the only alternative for Lionel was a hand reverse switch. Which is difficult to use if you’re located across the layout; also, much less impressive. But the Ives Corporation held a U.S. patent on the best remote reversing system in the industry in the critical boom years of the middle twenties — the E-unit drum, pawl, and solenoid we all know and love.

Some day I’ll take a look at the advertising and catalogs of the period, all obviously done before truth in advertising laws, but suffice it to say that at least in print, Messrs. Cowan, Ives, and Coleman did not get along well. So when the economy turned sour in the late twenties, Lionel and AF bought out the bankrupt Ives Corporation; not only to remove a competitor, but also to get the rights to the nifty Ives E-unit. Capitalizing on customer loyalty to, as well as familiarity with, the Ives name, production was maintained for several years with combinations of Lionel, AF, and Ives parts or whole units. For example, an Ives 258 is a Lionel 258 with Ives plates. With standard gauge trains, the situation was even more interesting. A late Ives 3236 had a Lionel 8 body on a cast iron Ives

frame. And the rolling stock varied from straight Lionel and AF cars with Ives decals to combinations of Lionel/AF bodies on Ives trucks and couplers. Most of these hybrids are highly collectible.

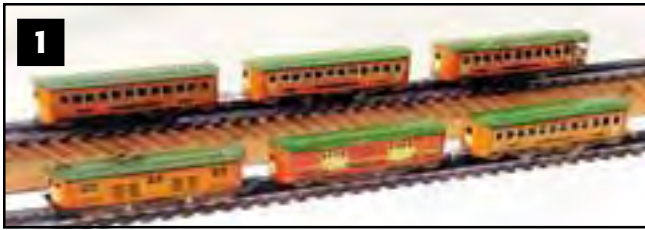
The transition lasted for only a couple of years. Joshua Cowan had no intention of sharing Ives for long, so Lionel bought out AF’s interest in Ives during the early thirties and changed its strategy. They continued to manufacture Ives trains, but introduced new items, generally of lower quality than Lionel’s branded equipment. Certainly, they had less trim. Some were subsequently brought into the Lionel line, although often as uncatalogued items. Many of these trains are highly collectible, either in Ives or Lionel livery. For example, check the prices on either Lionel or Ives 1766-67-68 standard gauge passenger cars or the 1695-96-97 (Ives) and 1685-86-87 (Lionel) O gauge cars, which I think are among the nicest looking prewar passenger sets ever produced by Lionel.

However, there are several more easily found and more affordable sets. The common link is that all these trains are lithographed. Lithography is a printing process common to most early train manufacturers for their lower-priced lines. Marx, in fact, used this process throughout their production into the 1950s. It involves far less work: all details, including ladders, brake wheels, etc., are printed on the car bodies rather than applied separately, as Lionel did on virtually all their production from the mid-twenties forward, until they started in with the Ives lettering.

Lionel’s advertising and catalog text often pointed out the extra quality of Lionel trains based on the use of separately applied parts instead of the cheaper lithography. The descriptions were initially an attempt to both cheapen the Ives name as customers were weaned and moved to Lionel in the early thirties, as well as a cost-saving method of production. Hence, after the demise of the Ives name, lots of this equipment was made under the Lionel name and sold in great quantities, but was not catalogued. Several examples of these lithographed trains include the very common and inexpensive Lionel 1690 series passenger cars and the similar 1679 freights that were originally produced as Ives by Lionel. In virtually all cases, the Ives stuff now will cost more than the Lionel lettered equipment. But it is hardly ever a budget buster.

I recently picked up a sort of mid-point set, and will show some of what was going on in the early 1930s and illustrate some points now of interest to collectors. Which means that all of the above was a rather long and involved introduction to what follows.





I have examples of most of the electric locomotives Lionel produced in prewar O gauge. Among the missing, however, are the smallest trains — these lithographed models. What is interesting to me is that although they are relatively difficult to find, they are still relatively inexpensive. So I was pleased to find a set of trains for sale which included a 1010 electric loco, three 1011 Pullmans, a 1019 observation car, and a 1020 baggage car. **Photo 1** shows the set, with the 1010, 1020, and a 1011 on the bottom, two 1011s and the 1019 on the top. Other than colors and lettering, they are the same as the Ives 1810, 1811, 1812, and 1813. All were offered in 1931-32. The 1010 and its equipment were not in the Lionel catalog, but were shown in a separate Winner Lines catalog in order to separate them from the higher quality Lionel line. The Ives versions were cataloged as Ives. This little loco is loosely based on a New Haven style electric motor, very much like the larger Lionel 253. The 253 is very common in several colors. Yet in every condition listed, it has a Greenburg value of more than twice the much-more-difficult-to-find 1010.

Similarly, the Pullmans are valued at roughly half the price of a contemporary Lionel Pullman. The observation and baggage cars are more rare, so they command a higher price; but not really high. In fact, only the baggage car is pricey because it was not as common in the lower end Lionel production of this period. As listed in Greenburg, the baggage car has a greater book value than the three Pullmans together.

When I saw the listing for a six-unit train in “excellent” condition, I called the seller. After some negotiation regarding the book value of the pieces, we agreed on a price. I became the new owner of a set I had wanted for some time, but here’s the collector issue. Remember the values noted above: the Pullmans are cheap, the observation car costs a bit more, and the baggage car is worth more than three Pullmans. When I got the set, I looked at all the equipment. The loco was arguably E; the Pullmans ranged from E to better-than-E (the seller said “almost mint”). But the observation and baggage cars were clearly not excellent; I considered them

VG. See **photo 2**, which has the best of the 1011s between the observation and baggage cars. I am not sending them back; it took years for me to find the set, and with the two harder-to-find cars included, plus what is essentially an extra Pullman, I’m happy with them. But if I had seen them on a table, rather than having had to negotiate over the phone, I might have been able to make a better case for a slightly lower price. After all, the higher priced items were in lesser condition.



So factor that into your phone negotiations. I do make notes for myself when I get something that is either particularly well described over the phone, or less well described as in this case. This affects my subsequent dealings. In fact, I have eliminated several sellers from future deals because I felt they described their wares in a less-than-forthright fashion. In a number of cases, after I finally got to see the pieces, they lied. That was not the case here, yet I will be more specific in asking for descriptions of every piece if I ever contact this particular gentleman again. Live and learn!

But to return to the trains. The construction is clearly cheaper than Lionel’s typical methods. The motor has only one sliding shoe pick-up. It has the same dummy headlight that the early 158 had. There is no other applied trim except the pantograph. The headlight is affixed by



tabs, the pantograph is riveted, not secured by a screw. The motor is held in place by tabs and a single screw, as opposed to its larger brothers, which typically use multiple screws. And the body and roof is a single lithographed piece folded together and tabbed (not screwed) to the frame. Car construction is similar. Everything rides on four wheels, which while usual for locomotives, this is half the complement for all but the cheapest rolling stock.

To return to the motor, the armature is relatively small, and the brushes are in tubes mounted on a fiber plate riveted to the frame, with the springs compressed and held in place by the wires conducting current to them. There are two holes in the tubes, and the wires are simply run through the holes and bent backwards. This obviates the need for either screws or solder. There is no reverse unit. Nice, but simple construction. But as a bottom of the line set, it was a “Winner” serving the same purpose as postwar O27 — a cheap but smooth-running introduction to the hobby. And with only four wheels, the cars set on the track very easily. Of course, they come off almost as easily! But they do run and run well. Like nearly everything Lionel made back then, even with the cheapened construction, mechanically, the cars are sound. So the bottom line for me is that though I am a bit disappointed in the overall condition of the set, I am happy to have it and to fill in a hole on my collection.

As a bit of an aside at this point, let me talk briefly about O gauge and O scale. Lionel didn’t care much about “scale” proportions until sometime later on when the hobby became more socially acceptable for men and not just boys. The magnificent 700 and 763 Hudsons were introduced in 1937. So we are talking strictly O gauge, which refers solely to the distance between the rails, not the accurate ratio of 1:48 to the prototype — the determinant for O scale. Given that the only requirement is that all the trains run on a common set of tracks, costs could be curtailed by using many common parts. Axles, wheel sets, loco drivers, even motors could be used in common. Therefore, the physical size of the specific equipment, plus, to some extent, the added trim and features, determined the price. **Photo 3** shows the



difference in size between the 1010 and the 253, both of which are based on the same loco. Both are O gauge and run on the same track. **Photo 4** shows a 248 and a 251 that were based on another common prototype. Of interest here is that the 248 was the bottom-of-the-line O gauge loco, and the 251 was the second-most-expensive one. They have exactly the same motor. The 251 cost about three times as much as the 248. Of course, you did get a hand reverse unit. When the E-unit became an option on the 251, it cost about 3-1/2 times as much as the non-reversing 248. One other point: since they have the same motor (it provides most of the weight), the 248, with its much lower center of gravity, is far less prone to derailments. And the small cars catalogued with the 248 actually make it a better hauler of multiple car trains than the larger ones that came with the 251. So if you want to operate this train, save some coin of the realm and consider the smaller versions!

And finally, Victory at Sea, the history of WWII from the allied point of view made in the early 50s with music by Richard Rogers, was narrated by Leonard Graves. A fine voice; second only to James Earl Jones and probably a major factor in my tenure in the USNR years later.



Photos by Ken Morgan



Connections

by George Nelson

RM 13073

Trains+Christmas+Lionel

Some of you will recognize this subheading as an entry into a search engine, for Internet sites that relate to all three of these words. Many of the web sites have photos that you might enjoy at this holiday season; however, the photo (below) used to illustrate this column was not taken from the Internet but from the temporary layout built each year by Fred Karkowski, who lives in Spanish Fort, Alabama, near Mobile. Fred blends his Department 56 collection with O-gauge trains to bring back visions of Christmas past!



*A NYC passenger train on the main line seems headed to the North Pole — as if it was the train in the popular children's holiday book, *The Polar Express*. Photo by Fred Karkowski*

My Christmas season memories as a small boy included trips to the Sears, Roebuck & Company department store in Shreveport in prewar days when it was okay for parents to leave their small children alone for a while to watch the glorious Christmas display of Lionel trains. I never grew tired of looking and always hated to leave when Mother finished her shopping. Although my interests shifted to other things when I went to college and then entered the Navy, Sears continued to display toy trains for many years, both in their stores and in their catalogs (see: *The Toy Train Department, Electric Train Catalog Pages from the legendary Sears Christmas Wishbooks of the 1950's and 1960s* edited by Thomas W. Holland, Windmill Press, 1996).

Artist Angela Trotta Thomas, featured on the cover of this and many other December-dated *TLR* editions,

helps us relive those days with her artistic rendering of Lionel trains. You will enjoy visiting her web site, <www.angelatrottathomas.com>, where you can view (and buy) many of her paintings. One of my favorites is “Toyland Express,” which catches the feel of kids looking at a Lionel Christmas display, as I did years ago.

Over a period of several weeks, I did Internet searches to see what I could find with Trains + Christmas + Lionel. Using my CompuServe Internet search function, Trains + Christmas showed 20,175 web matches. Two weeks later, the same search criteria came up with 20,248 matches. Many of these, as you are probably aware, were the same site listed several different ways. One that may be of interest to your children or grandchildren is a book that you can read on screen, *Santa and the Christmas Trains*, with story by Steve Little and illustrations (in crayon) by Jillian Little, age 9. Look for: <www.littlevillage.com/Christmas%20Stories/Christmas%20Trains%20Page%201.htm>.

When I refined my CompuServe search to Trains + Christmas + Lionel, I found 1,185 web matches. The first four were related to the Lionel Train Exchange <www.trainxchange.com>, followed by two for Department 56 Lionel trains, and several were replies to a query, “Re: Suggestions for Lionel trains for my 2-year old,” posted on the RailServe forum <www.railserv.com/index.html>.

Searching for Holiday + Train + Layouts gave 665 matches and quite a variety, including various gauges (up to 4 ft. 8-1/2 in.). Those of you in the Northwest may want to ride with Santa or visit layouts in Portland, Oregon; see “Holiday Junction: A Celebration of Pacific Northwest Railways — Portland, CitySearch,” <<http://portland.citysearch.com>>. In the Northeast I found the Danbury (Conn.) Railway Museum with their Santa Special at <www.danbury.org/drm/santa97.htm>. In Ohio/Kentucky, check out train displays listed on the Cincinnati Post's web site at <www.cincypost.com/living/trains112597.html>.

I also used <www.yahoo.com> and searched for Christmas + Lionel + Trains, and only got two hits! Both were The Christmas Shoppe in Tallahassee <<http://host72.jssinc.net/>>, a seller of Lionel trains. There are more search engines and more combinations of words that you might enter to find delightful photos representing your favorite hobby and/or train things to buy. I encourage you to go on a search of your own.



In an earlier column I mentioned “The O-Gauge Toy Train Page” <www.napanet.net/~jlbaker/index1.htm> and its extensive listing of links related to our hobby by Jerry Baker (RM 21842). Some of these links led to Christmas-related train sites. For example, Dave and Rosemary (RM 10362) Gilbert’s Merchants Landing in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, displays photos of their layouts, including a snow scene; see: <www.merchantslanding.com/index.htm>. Not strictly Christmas-oriented, but you may enjoy taking a panoramic tour of The Choo Choo Barn in Strasburg, Pennsylvania <www.choochoobarn.com/pvista/ccb360.html>.

A Christmas web site that you should not miss is Lionel Lines Christmas Village, listed under The O-Gauge Toy Train Page’s “Train Hobbyist Home Pages” <<http://home.stlnet.com/~iarerelative/lionel.htm>>. This site is complete with Christmas music, “Tannenbaum” or “Oh, Christmas Tree,” with a story and photos telling about the owner’s Christmas tradition and trains. The links are good also. “Lionel Train Sets at eToys” takes you to eToys Lionel. When I looked the list of items for sale, it included 94 toys, 20 books, two software programs and one video game. The earlier listings were “Little Lionel,” but as you continue you come to big folks toys such as Lionel’s BNSF Dash 9 for \$549.99. The link, “Holiday Model Railroads at Model Railroading,” takes you to “About.com” and a column about Lionel trains for the holidays. If the link doesn’t work, try their model railroad home page at <<http://modelrailroad.miningco.com/hobbies/pastimes/modelrailroad/>>. This About.com site has links to Lionel at <www.lionel.com>, back to Lionel Lines Christmas Village, and to “Big Red’s Hi-Rail O Gauge Layout” at <www.netaxis.com/~tpleyden/layout.htm>. “Big Red” is Tom Leyden (RM 11641) who lives in Westport, Connecticut.

Thanks to Bob Mintz (RM 7849), I learned that Smuckers (“With a name like Smucker’s, it has to be good”) has a Lionel train for sale on their web site at <www.smucker.com>. It’s a Lionel Chessie Flyer freight train set with a 1999 limited edition Smucker’s hot fudge tank car.

If you’re really into the Internet, you must not overlook e-Bay, the auction site at <www.eBay.com>. I searched e-Bay for “Lionel Christmas” and came up with 19 items. “Lionel Hallmark” turned up 42 items. Since these are on-going auctions, each day you check the site you may come up with a different number of items.

“Got Stuff? Sell your stuff on . . .”. Those above words emblazoned a full-page advertisement in today’s (October 27, 1999) Mobile Register, introducing “Auctions from Alabama Live at <www.al.com>, the fun, fast way to buy and sell stuff.” They even have a category for model trains, but no sellers yet. The O-Gauge Toy Train Page lists 19 auction sites. The November *Classic Toy Trains* contained advertisements for only four auctions, but the December issue had ten auctions (three did not list a web site)! I have not looked at all of these sites, but of the ones that I have looked at, e-Bay currently has the most to offer sellers and buyers of toy trains.

If you intend to sell or buy on one of these Internet auction sites, I recommend you read “On-line Auction Guide, How to Buy, Sell, and Thrive in the On-line Arena,” by Steven Allen, *Classic Toy Trains*, December 1999, pp. 76-79.

I have never liked auctions. It seems a complete waste of time to sit while item after item that I have no interest in is auctioned off, on the outside chance that I may place the winning bid on the one item I want. Not long ago at a local auction house, I placed a sealed bid for a Lionel #2026, 2-6-2 steamer, and mine was the winning bid. It is a nice addition to my small postwar steamer collection and, at least, I didn’t have to sit there. But, since I write about the Internet, I feel obligated to get some first hand experience. Remember, I did this for you!

At the LCCA convention in Fort Worth, I bought a Lionel 2023 Alco AA, yellow Union Pacific, for what I thought was a reasonable price. It showed some signs of wear, similar to much of my operating collection, but it was an excellent runner. I thought briefly about looking for its matching passenger cars, but there were none listed on e-Bay, and they would probably cost more than I wanted to pay.

So I decided to look for the freight cars instead. Tom McComas & James Tuohy, in their *Lionel, A Collector’s Guide & History, Postwar, Vol. II*, 4th printing, 1997, p. 163, show that the yellow #2023 was cataloged in 1950 with a #6656 stock car, a #6465 tank car, a #6456 hopper and a #6357 caboose. The Sears “Wishbook” offered this same set in 1950 and 1951.

I looked for these cars on e-Bay by typing “Lionel” and the car number in the search window, and then started a search. Note: if you just type in “Lionel” you will get a listing of ALL the Lionel items being auctioned, including things related to Lionel Ritchie or Lionel Hampton, with the default setting giving items in the order the



auctions expire. When I first searched for the caboose, "Lionel 6357," there were nine for sale. The screen showed the auction item number, a brief description of each item with a hyperlink to a more complete description (most have photos), the "almost" current price, number of bids, and the date and time when the auction will end for each item. More current bid information was available for each item at a click on the hyperlink.

I decided to bid, so I clicked on the appropriate hyperlink and was carried to the e-Bay registration page. I answered some questions about myself (e-mail address, name, address, phone number, etc.) and clicked on "submit." I got a message that I needed to give a different e-mail address (one they can easily verify) or a credit card number, part of their security arrangement. I resubmitted my registration after making this change. Within a matter of minutes (they say expect up to 24 hours delay) I received an e-mail from e-Bay giving me instructions for the next step. I finalized my registration by reading the user agreement, completing and submitting the confirmation registration form, and preparing a bid. The whole process only took about ten minutes.

After losing several bids, I decided to bid on another 6357 caboose with box. The photo confirmed, in my mind, that the caboose was in excellent condition as described. The seller was in Maryland. Looking at his other auctions, I realized that he was not primarily a "train person." His Feedback Profile showed that previous purchasers were pleased with his performance. My maximum bid was \$15. When I entered this bid amount, I received a confirming message from e-Bay telling me that I was the current high bidder and that my current bid was in the

amount of \$9.99. As the auction progressed, e-Bay increased my bid as required until it reached my previously set maximum of \$15; then they sent me an "Outbid Notice" and alerted me that I would have to submit a higher bid to get this item, so I increased my maximum bid to \$20.

The auction for this caboose ended at 7:14 p.m. PDT on September 26. The following day I received a message from e-Bay confirming that I was the winning bidder, which I already knew from checking the completed auction listing for this item. Shortly after that, the seller contacted me. Per his instructions, I sent him a Postal Money Order for \$21.35 (bid was \$16.50, plus postage and insurance). The caboose arrived by Priority Mail on October 8, 1999. The September '99 *Interchange Track* had two of these cabooses for sale at \$25 and \$35 plus UPS.

I also bought a #6656 stock car for \$19.25 (bid was \$13.50, plus postage and insurance). The September '99 *Interchange Track* had three of these stock cars for sale at \$25, \$30 and \$39 plus UPS.

I had fun buying these two cars on e-Bay, and I feel that I got a reasonably good deal on each. However, it was frustrating when I was outbid on earlier attempts to make purchases. I found that it was necessary to pay pretty close attention to the bids and to my e-mails or, as *CTT* suggests, decide the maximum amount I was willing to pay for an item and let the chips fall where they may. I would rather look and buy at hobby shops or at train shows, but e-Bay and the other auction sites can be an excellent way to find an elusive item that may not turn up in your neighborhood.



In my train room, a Lionel 2023 Alco AA set pulls a freight train consisting of a 6456 Sunoco tank car, 6656 Lionel stock car, and 6357 caboose. The 2023s were purchased at the LCCA convention in Fort Worth, the 6456 at a local train show in Fairhope, Alabama, and the 6656 and 6357 at the e-Bay Internet auction site.

Photo by George Nelson



The Adventures of Railroad Mike

by Mario Evangelista

RM 19687

The Y2K Story

Mike looked up from *The Inquirer* newspaper and mumbled to himself, but loud enough for his mother to hear from across the room, “We only have a few weeks to get ready!”

“What’s that?” asked his mother.

“Oh, nothing mom,” he replied, avoiding an explanation of the emergency to someone who could not possibly appreciate the intricate technical details of his problem.

A terse smile formed on her lips for a moment and then she said, “You shouldn’t talk to yourself, people will think you’re a bit strange.”

“Yeh, sure Mom,” he replied as he picked up the paper, tucked it under his arm, and walked to the telephone with the sense of urgency of a military general who just discovered his position was about to be overrun.

Mike’s mom put down the book she was reading and watched her son from over the top of her glasses. Shaking her head, she wondered what he was up to now. But, not wanting to be too overbearing, she shrugged her shoulders and went back to her book.

In the other room Mike was on the phone pounding out the number of the only person in this world that he knew would know what should be done about this potential disaster. As the phone rang, Mike glanced at the article he was reading — about updating Amtrak’s train control systems in preparation for the year 2000.

“Hello Art, we gotta talk!”

“Mike, what’s up?” asked his best friend, Arthur.

“You heard about this Y2K thing, right?” Mike expected his friend to be completely “up” on the whole issue because Arthur was the authoritative source of knowledge for all mechanical questions. “I’m talking about the year 2000 computer bug! You know, the thing they’ve been talking about every night on TV for the past three years,” Mike added, starting to lose patience with his friend’s lack of knowledge in current events. Raising his voice in frustration, he asked rhetorically, “Arthur, how can you be so smart with historical facts about trains and cars and be like a lost ball in tall grass when it comes to something that could destroy everything we’ve been working on for the past eight months?”

Arthur was quiet for a couple of seconds and then asked in surprise, “They cancelled the parade on New Year’s Day? There

won’t be any people on Broad Street to come by and see our train display.”

“No, Art,” he explained in a tone that shifted from frustration into exasperation, “Y2K is about all the computers in the world shutting down on New Year’s Day because they can’t count past the date of 1999. You know, the year two thousand.”

Suddenly Arthur’s tone changed. “You mean to tell me that our new Command Control won’t work after December 31?”

Mike looked up to heaven with thanks for this revelation and responded with a loud, “DA!”

Arthur was quiet for a couple of seconds. He felt uncomfortable in the role of the uninformed, so he broke the strained silence with the first thing that popped into his head. “I’ll be right over, and we can figure something out.”

When Arthur arrived at Mike’s house, they went down to the train room in the basement and put the Y2K question aside for a more compelling subject — operating toy trains. “Command Control is a lot simpler to use than I thought,” said Mike.

Arthur’s eyes lit up and triggered a spontaneous smile. “How did that *OGR* video work out for you?”

“Great,” responded Mike, “that guy Rich Melvin made it so simple and clear that even my dad was running his old e-unit stuff in conventional mode in only an hour or so.”

“I know,” replied Arthur. “How did he like being able to walk around the room with the Cab-1?”

“He loved it. When my mom went downstairs to do the laundry, dad and I controlled the trains from the living room as we watched TV. For a minute, we had her convinced the place was haunted.”

Both boys laughed, but the mood changed when Mike’s mother called to them from upstairs to “stow it or start washing windows.” They were astonished that she heard them from that distance.

Arthur asked Mike if they should ask his dad about Y2K related to Command Control. Mike laughed and added in a whisper, “Are you kidding? He’s the poster boy for the technically challenged! The VCR in his shop has flashed 12:00 for as far back as I can remember because he can’t re-set it.”

Arthur giggled with Mike and added, “Yeh, Lionel should put both our dad’s pictures on television with Rich Melvin and a slogan — if these two can master Command Control, anyone can!”

After a few moments of self-indulgent silliness, the boys got serious and were deep in thought about the problem at hand. Arthur was first to talk and asked, “What about Rita? She’s pretty good with electronics.” They walked upstairs to make the call from the kitchen.

They were disappointed to hear by phone that neither Rita nor Helen knew enough about the Command Control



circuitry and software to have any real input. “Besides,” added Rita before she hung up, “don’t you think Lionel would of thought of that before they put it on the market?” Mike put the receiver down and explained that Rita did not appreciate the seriousness of the Y2K issue.

They called their favorite hobby shops in town for an answer to their question, but they were told that all the full-time people where at the Monroeville Train Show near Pittsburgh.

“Now what?” asked Arthur.

“I don’t know,” said Mike with a shrug of his shoulders.

Arthur was admiring the Lionel catalog with a new Pacific locomotive with Lionel colors and the blue 44-tonner for 1999 when Mike suddenly grabbed the train catalog from his startled friend and exclaimed, “Why didn’t I think of this before? We can call Lionel.”

“That’s a long distance call,” protested Arthur, “and your dad would KILL us!”

Mike remembered the cautionary talk with his dad about being on the phone too much. He turned and walked over to his mother in the living room, put his arm around her neck, and resting his head on her shoulder asked, “What are you reading?”

She smiled and asked why he wanted to call Lionel. Mike wondered how she could read a book and still be able to hear a conversation from another room. But he put that aside for another time. “It’s kinda technical,” Mike replied, “and I don’t want to bother you with it.”

“It’s no bother, I’d love to help you with your problem,” she said.

“Please mom, I need someone who is — well, technical — to talk to.”

She hid her hurt feelings and remembered when she was the center of his world. She missed his coming to her with problems. “Oh, OK,” she said with a sigh, “but don’t stay on the line too long.”

Mike thanked her for the indirect grant of permission and went straight to the telephone. He opened his father’s phone book, opened the page with the “L” tab, and found the name Lionel. “Here,” he said to Arthur, “read off the number to me.”

Arthur found the number and felt the excitement. This was the first time he ever called the home office of a famous corporation. “It’s 1-810-949-4100.” Mike dialed the number and let it ring until voice mail answered and announced that the offices were closed for the weekend. “Oh, it’s after business hours,” he recalled aloud.

“Now what?” asked Arthur.

“I don’t know,” responded Mike.

Just then Mike’s mother came in from the other room and announced, “I hate to break this up, but you’d better be getting home, Arthur. It’s getting dark. Mike’s father is working late, so he won’t be able to walk you home.”

Arthur grabbed his coat and turned to the front door with Mike following him. “Tomorrow is Saturday. We’ll figure something out,” said Mike as he held the door open. “Call me in the morning,” he added.

Arthur turned, waved good-by, and walked the two blocks to his house with images of trains going out of control in front of a crowd of strangers.

Mike was awakened from sleep by the sound of a train whistle coming from his telephone/locomotive on the nightstand next to his bed. After a few rings he opened his eyes to a dark room. Looking at the clock and realizing it was Saturday morning, he picked up the green boiler of the Southern Crescent telephone and placed it to his ear. It was Arthur. “Get up, lead head! The day is wasting away, and we’ve got work to do! Get dressed and meet me at my house for breakfast.”

“But it’s only five a.m.,” protested Mike.

“Yeh, but I’ve got an idea,” said Arthur and then hung up abruptly.

Mike considered going back to sleep but thought better of it. Above all else, he knew that when Arthur gets an idea you don’t fight it. You just ride it out. So he arose and got dressed.

“Who was that?” inquired his mother from the hall.

“Arthur. He invited me to breakfast at his house,” replied Mike.

His mother knew that Arthur’s parents were early risers, so she agreed to the arrangement; but Mike was not to go over until 7:30 a.m. when they normally eat their morning meal.

At breakfast the boys told Arthur’s parents about their concern for Command Control being Year 2000 compliant. When they were done, Arthur’s father leaned back in his chair, put his hands behind his head, and thought out loud. “I’m an accountant, and I use computers as a tool every day at work. I don’t know what makes them work. If it weren’t for our MIS department, I’d be lost. In fact, I was amazed at how fast I got the hang of Command Control and how much simpler everything is to operate.” After a short pause, he continued, “Y’know boys, when the ZW first came out very few people understood how it worked. But we learned to build control blocks, wire up switches and operate all kinds of accessories with it. In retrospect, that was much harder to master than Command Control.”

Arthur waited to make sure his father was done talking, and then jumped in.



"I have an idea," offered Arthur. "Dad, could you call one of your computer friends at work and ask them what they think?"

"S'pose I could," replied his father with a shrug, "but just because they know about NT servers doesn't mean they will be able to tell us anything about Command Control. That little black box does a lot of thinking for us. There's got to be some complex software and hardware involved in order to run my whole 30x60 foot layout, trains, switches and accessories from one Cab-1 unit."

"Yeh, and you can do it from any room in the house," Mike quipped. He and Arthur smiled at the recall of yesterday's "haunted" joke.

"Hey, I've got an idea," said Arthur's father. "I'll call Steve Stanley. He promised to come over sometime and give me some pointers on running in Command mode. I'll go call him. This could be the day!"

"So, what was your idea?" Mike asked Arthur after his friend's father left the room.

"Oh, I thought we could change the date and time in the Command Control system, but I couldn't find where that could be done."

"Why would you want to do that?" asked Mike.

"If we could move the date up to the year 2000, we would see if it will work or not."

Arthur continued, "But the directions don't mention anything about dates or time."

Arthur's father interrupted the conversation saying, "Steve will be over in a little bit. I'm sure he can answer all your questions."

When Steve arrived, he showed them the manual to the Command Control and some information gleaned from the Internet. After a brief introduction, Mike asked him the big Y2K question. Steve looked at the boys, slowly shook his head, and said, "That is a date issue, and the Lionel system doesn't know what time it is, nor does it care." Steve noticed that he was starting to lose them, including Arthur's dad, so he explained it further. "The Command Base is only a device that talks to your platform and executes short scripts such as remembering certain switch sequences so you could place a particular engine in its designated spot in your yard or make it stop, go, or reverse in whatever sequence or combination you choose. But if you wish to perform real time functions such as turning your trains off and on or making them stop and go automatically, that can be done with special software installed on a Pentium processor interface to the computers COM port."

"Who makes that?" asked Arthur.

"Steve thought for a second and then said, 'Traincom makes

a good software package. With it, you can create multiple train routes and tell where they are on your platform at any given time. It's described in the August edition of *O-Gauge Railroadng*."

Mike looked at Arthur because they had talked about an automatic display for the club layout. They turned back to Steve and asked, "Is that software Y2K ready?"

Steve looked at him and smiled while shaking his head, "It's not the software but the computer you use that is Y2K questionable."

Both boys smiled and then Mike told Steve about their train display at the community center and how they hoped to draw some of the New Year's Day parade spectators from Broad Street to the layout afterwards.

They spent a few hours in the attic train room and agreed to meet at the Community Center on New Year's Day for the big train display.

When Mike and Arthur entered Mike's house for lunch, their friend Rita greeted them. She was sitting with Mike's mom in the kitchen. Rita told them that Mike's mother was explaining Command Control to her. The boys looked at each other in bewilderment, but before they could say anything, Mike's mom said, "I have some hot soup and grilled cheese sandwiches for you boys. But first, wash your hands and hang up your coats!"

"How come you know about Lionel's Command Control?" asked Mike.

"I bought the new Command Link software from Traincom for your father's birthday next week. You know how he is with computers, so I thought it would be good to go to www.lionel.com and read up on Command Control." Her answer was so matter-of-fact in tone that Mike was confused.

"I thought you were lost trying to understand technical stuff," he muttered.

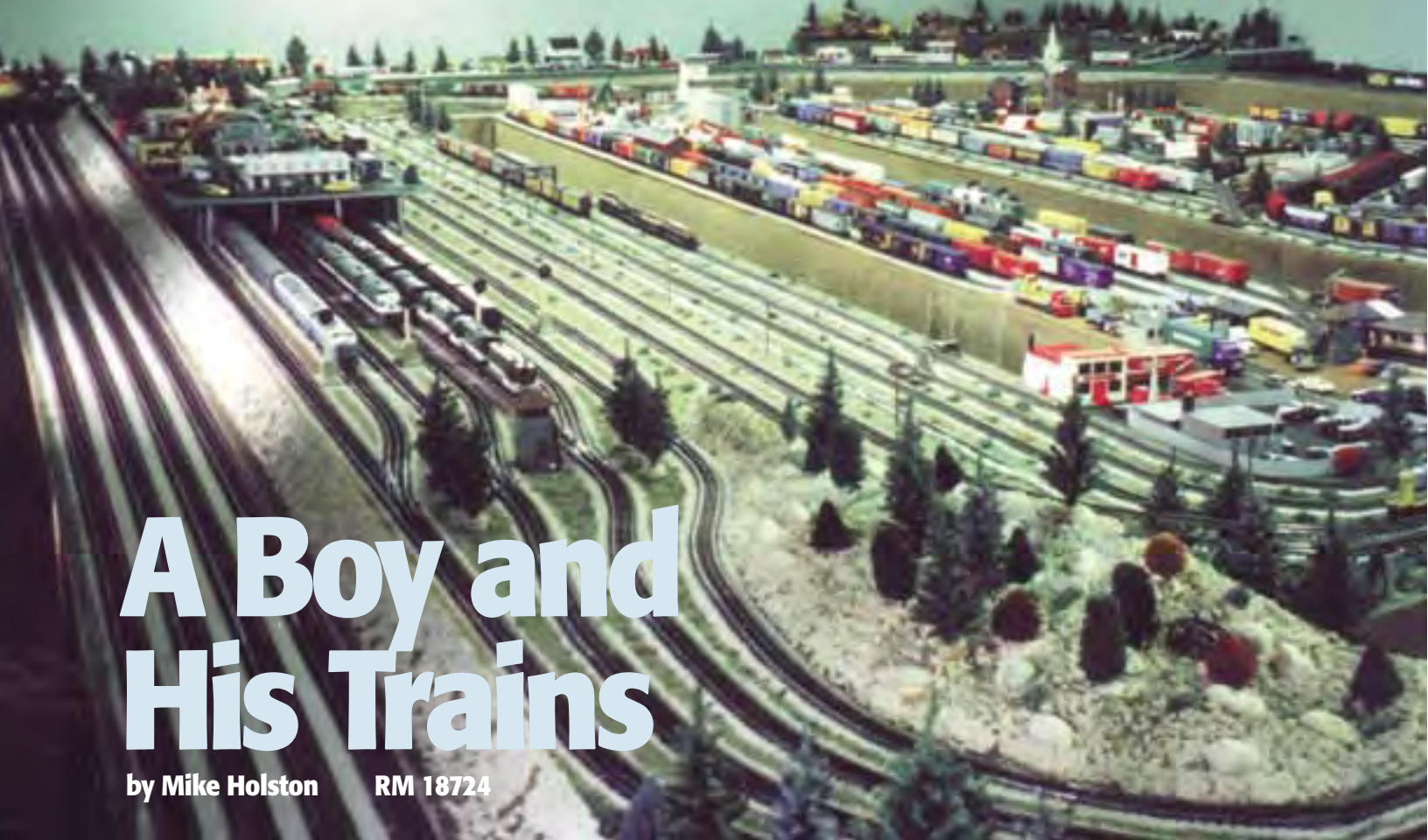
She looked at her son, smiled, and then turned back to her work at the stove. "I don't know what gave you that idea," she said. "Before your father and I were married, I worked as a technical consultant and designed Cisco router networks. I only quit work so I could stay home and take care of you."

The two boys glanced sideways at each other and felt quite foolish. Mike tried to hide their embarrassment and shift the blame for their wasted energy with the question, "Why didn't you tell me you understood electronic stuff?"

His mother turned, placed their lunch on the kitchen table, gave him a soft pat on the top of his head and with a smug smile said, "Because you never asked."

Rita, sitting with her arms folded as if in judgment, smirked and said, "Sometimes I doubt if you two will ever learn."





A Boy and His Trains

by Mike Holston RM 18724

One Childhood with Lionel Trains Is Not Enough

I was 14 months old when I received my first Lionel train set for Christmas in 1952. My parents have told me that when I was an infant, they would get me to sleep sometimes by running the train along a circle of track around my crib. As it circled on the floor below me, the train's hypnotic rhythm and track sounds became a rather effective sleep inducer.



1

boxcar; see **photo 1**. I added these to the train layout in my bedroom. It featured an 8x10-foot rectangle of track and one passing siding for my #681 Pennsy; see **photo 2**.

We moved to a slightly larger house in the mid-60s. Like most guys in my generation, girls, cars, and school athletics diverted my attention, but I did manage to



2



3

At Christmas time in 1958, Santa left me a shiny Alcoa hopper car and the beautiful Pacemaker NYC





convert to Super O and put down four loops of track in a 12 x 14-foot area as shown in **photo 3**.



My parents built their country home in the mid-70s. At the end of the hallway a door opened up into a large, 28x48-foot room — train heaven. Discarded wooden pallets were plentiful where dad worked, and we helped “recycle” them. In 1978, we brought home several truck-loads of this wood, bought 40 sheets of 1/2-inch plywood and many 1x6-inch boards, and began hammering and sawing away on benchwork. The result is shown in **photo 4**.

In two years time, we had installed 10 Gargraves main line tracks and placed some scenery upon the layout as shown in **photo 5**.

During the next 16 years, I worked in my spare time on the layout. **Photo 6** shows the extent of the empire at the Holston house as it looked in 1996 before it was dismantled and stored when we moved to another location. **Photos 7, 8, and 9** are close-ups of certain areas of the layout — a Cat dealership and sales lot with a Coke bottling plant in the background, a farm and industry district, and the downtown area with major roadways. I’m the Trainmaster in **photo 10**, directing traffic on the highway — figuring out how to place some guardrails on the overpass.





I can set over 400 cars in motion at once with six ZWs providing the power, but I seldom “push the envelope” because the noise seems as thundering as Niagara Falls. The layout contains 1850 feet of main lines, and the main line curvatures are 72, 68, 64, 60 inches. A 40 to 50 car consist could be run on main lines 1, 2, 5,



and 6; 30 car trains on main lines 3, 4, 7, and 8; and 15-20 car trains on main lines 9, 10, 11, and 12.

Among the 115 buildings and structures on the layout, there are six train station, eight farms, five churches, two strip malls, four 7-11 stores, six gas stations, over 30 residential homes, and 50 or so factories, municipal buildings, stores, and warehouses. About 375 Lifelike, Woodland Scenics, and “Hugh Levy” (RM 412) trees cover the layout.

I used roofing felt for roadways, driveways, and parking lots. I applied the “rush hour rule” so roads could be jammed with 130 buses, tankers, tractor-trailer rigs,

200 cars and pickups, and 100 pieces of construction equipment. Over 500 train cars and about 60 locomotives were usually on the layout.

I plan to build another layout and incorporate some of the things I learned from constructing this one:



installing a better heating and cooling system, adding a layout lighting system, using sound-absorbing insulation for noise abatement, and eliminating duck-unders and crawl-through spaces.

Finally, I must thank my wife, Celia, and daughter, Erica, who endured my coming in late for supper on many nights because I was at my parent’s house playing with Lionel trains.



About the author: Lionel trains have been in Mike Holston’s life for over 45 years. He works for the Georgia Power Company in mechanical maintenance. In his 22 years at the steam generating plant branch, he sees 100-car coal trains rolling in every day.



LCCA Treasurer's Report

by Eric P. Fogg

RM 12768

November 4, 1999

Thanks to continued strong support from our membership, 1998 was another great year for the Lionel Collectors Club of America. We took the liberty of holding our convention in Philadelphia, home to Ben Franklin. Famous for his conservative fiscal advice, we think Ben would have approved of the investments club members made in attending the Convention, as well as buying Convention Cars and Stocking Stuffers. These investments provide operating funds for LCCA

and pay dividends by making this the premier club for collectors.

The year ahead promises to be just as important, as evidenced by the on-going and thoughtful work of your Officers and Directors. Continued efforts at cost savings, cost cutting, and attention to operating details are some of the reasons why there was no need for a dues increase this year.

As I begin my third year as your Treasurer, having just been re-elected, I greatly appreciate the support of the general membership as well as the opportunity to work with your current Officer team. I'm proud to be of service to the club and look forward to not only a new year, but a new century for the LCCA!

Eric P. Fogg, Treasurer

Lionel Collectors Club of America

Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Membership Equity

Modified Cash Basis

	Year Ended	
ASSETS	1997	1998
Current Assets:		
Cash in Banks	\$182,972	\$464,214
Marketable Securities	198,962	
Inventory at cost	69,153	77,970
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	451,087	542,184
Fixed Assets:		
Equipment, net of Deptn.	3,153	7,041
Other Assets:		
Convention deposits	9,470	1,725
TOTAL ASSETS	\$463,710	\$550,950
LIABILITIES & MEMBERSHIP EQUITY		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$64	\$0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	64	0
MEMBERSHIP EQUITY	\$463,646	\$550,950

Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Change in Membership Equity

Modified Cash Basis

	Year Ended	
REVENUE	1997	1998
Car Sales	\$236,648	\$219,327
Dues	345,802	321,832
Convention	92,181	155,419
Interest & Dividends	24,452	25,576

Initiation & Reinstatement Fees	28,365	6,385
Meets	4,464	5,780
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Assets	(5,868)	1,038
Freight Income	14,056	14,383
Other	675	345
TOTAL REVENUE	\$740,775	\$750,085
EXPENSES		
Car Sales	163,799	143,514
Lion Roars	137,666	122,023
Interchange Track	142,534	137,826
Roster	4,703	
Professional Fees	36,862	38,536
Officers & BOD	57,101	60,204
Convention Expenses	86,138	129,322
Promotion	2,677	
Meet Expense	7,181	3,432
Miscellaneous	1,048	959
Federal Income Tax	6,000	
Insurance	7,550	6,563
Depreciation	1,983	1,931
Bank & Credit Card Charges	3,849	4,230
Membership Expense	5,900	8,037
Membership Drive Expense	47,387	
Printing		1,529
Election Notices & Expense	5,212	4,675
TOTAL EXPENSES	717,590	662,781
Revenue in excess of expenses	23,185	87,304
Membership equity at start of year	440,461	463,646
Membership equity at end of year	\$463,646	\$550,950



