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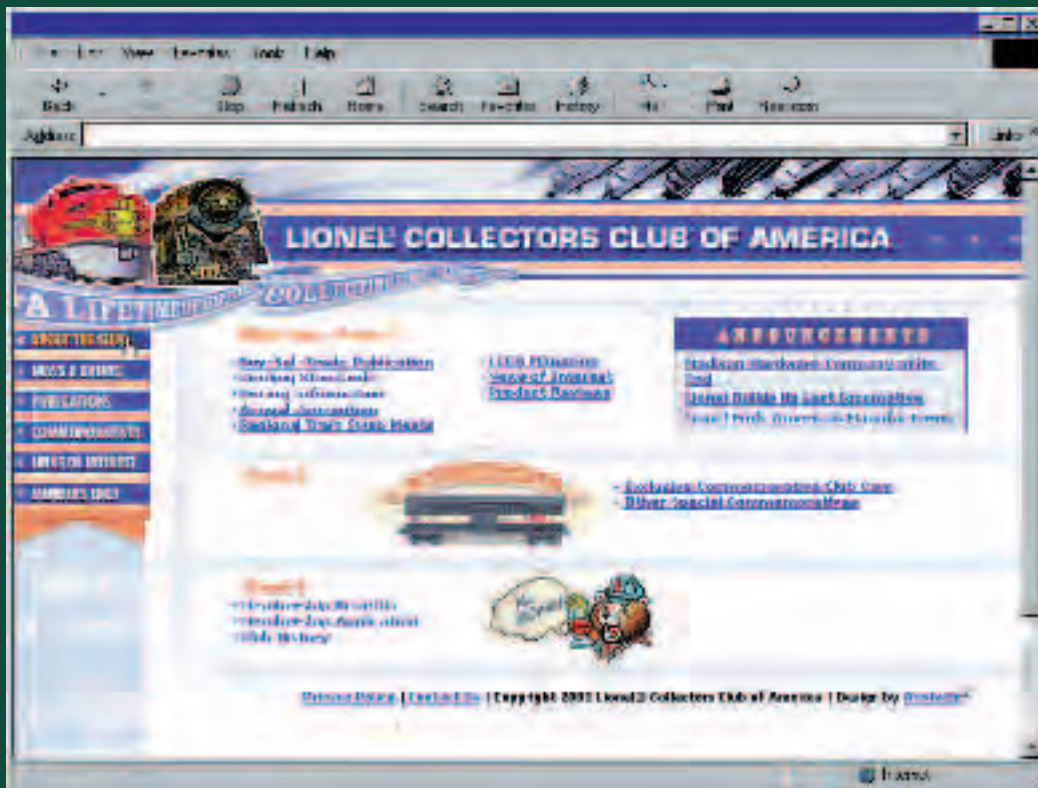
The Lion Roars



PUBLISHED BY THE LIONEL® COLLECTORS CLUB OF AMERICA • BIMONTHLY FEBRUARY, APRIL, JUNE, AUGUST, OCTOBER, DECEMBER

Altoona here we come!

The Official LCCA Website is getting bigger and better.



Check it out at..
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ON THE COVER:
**Happy faces aboard the Amtrak
 LCCA "Broadway Limited".**

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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.

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Librarian - Back issues of *The Lion Roars*.

Editor, TLR - "Make good" copy of *The Lion Roars*.

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The President's Report

by John Fisher

RM 6541

Lionelcollectors.org And the hits just keeping on a coming!

If you haven't been to the best toy train website lately you have been missing out on some fun. Please accept this as your personal invitation to put this high on your list of favorite places. Check it out and you will find an ever-expanding **members only** section that is now password protected. Don't have your password yet?—it takes just a minute and we will email you a password that will bring you into this exciting world of toy train fun. Our website editor (and contributing author), Craig Tribuzi continues to add more useful pull down options and you may wish to just do a little exploring and discovering. We now have a fully updated and current roster of members. This new online version features a number of unique search capabilities which would not be practical with a printed edition. You can search by name, state, and zip code, then zero in on members in a specific area—it is just great! Another unique feature of this online roster is that due to its dynamic nature, it will never be out of date.

All of this is just the beginning. Larry Black and Greg Elder have successfully completed beta testing on our fully dynamic electronic version of the most successful buy-sell-swap publication anywhere, LCCA's acclaimed **Interchange Track**. Your new **E Track** will permit you to submit ads, respond to ads, or change and/or delete information on a true 24/7 basis. Think about a totally current, updated toy train marketplace every time you log on. No more waiting for an every-other-month publication date and deadlines. You will be able to list items for sale whenever you choose and once sold, they can be immediately removed. This is what we mean

by adding value to your LCCA membership. This is just the beginning of a number of useful features coming your way.


LCCA Volunteers

Your club benefits in many ways from the volunteerism of its members and at our recent annual convention we took time to say "Thank You" to the members of The Lion Roars editorial team. These individuals give freely of their time, knowledge and expertise to enlighten the rest of us, all the while making it interesting and fun. One member of that team, Dennis Clad, has just completed an incredible seven year run with *The Mane Line*. Thanks Dennis, and please continue to keep these fun articles coming (and no, I do not know where to buy the Lionel "Farmall" set—Dennis was right—they are scarce). Editor Bill Schmeelk is always ready to welcome new authors with interesting ideas. If you have something fun to share with the rest of us, please contact him.

Membership Contest.

Thanks to all of you who have accepted our invitation to share your thoughts and ideas regarding ways we can continue to enhance membership benefits. Our little contest with three nifty prizes has some time left so please email, call, or write to me with your thoughts and ideas. We are committed to relentlessly seeking new ways to delight and surprise you with added value. A couple of great suggestions just arrived today from member Paul Hooretz. Winners will be announced in our December issue.

Las Vegas, July 22-27, 2003

Plans are well underway for our next annual convention at the fabulous Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino in the world's number one meeting destination city. Our next issue will have all the details, and best of all, on line registration will be possible for the first time ever. We promise more great family-oriented fun with professionally conducted tours, a dynamite Get Acquainted Party (think Series 2 Collector Cards!), incredible convention and on site cars, along with more great LCCA convention surprises. We will continue to provide the best convention value anywhere. 

WANTED

Train articles with photos of a layout in progress
from beginning to end; although we all know
a layout is never "finished."

Bill Schmeelk, Editor, TLR
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Remembering Pittsburgh!

by Larry Black RM 240

I had been looking forward to attending this, my 28th consecutive LCCA annual convention for almost 9 months and finally the time had arrived to head for Pittsburgh. I say 28th but I actually have attended 29 including the one in Huntsville in 1973 where I joined the club and got my very first LCCA

convention car. The trip from central Kentucky led me over some of the most beautiful territory in the Midwest through Ohio and West Virginia. As I cruised through Wheeling, WV, I remembered the Wheeling convention in 1979. It was then that the LCCA issued one of the most unique convention cars to that point – the Airco Boxcar. It seems that each and every convention has some remembrances left in the back of my memory bank. Well, on to Pittsburgh!

My wife and a traveling companion, Dick Johnson, made the trip in record time. Dick and I were bound and determined not to miss our exit this time having visited the site earlier in the year in March together. Miss it we did! It seems the Pennsylvania State Highway department saw fit to erect new road exit signs just weeks before. No matter, we discovered it and actually found our way thru the city streets quickly and on to Station Square. I had visited Station Square years before, after it had been redone into a Mecca for the visitor and local alike. A friend from Kentucky had been transferred to Pittsburgh and invited us to come see him and attend a train show. Nothing would do but he had to take me to this once



Pittsburgh and Lake Erie facility now kept from the wrecking ball altogether.

I really didn't remember Station Square that well though from before. But I believe it had really changed quite a bit. The Sheraton Hotel was absolutely beautiful! What a location for a train

convention! Literally, the mainline ran behind the hotel but a few feet and was a train watcher's paradise night and day. The lobby was decked out in railroad pictures and the huge lobby atrium was alive with excitement already. We had arrived on Sunday night but I could sense the throngs of LCCA'ers were on their way. Had to get ready! The Amtrak trip was due to leave bright and early Tuesday morning. That evening we walked the shops and kind of checked out the lay of the land. Lots of restaurants! Even a new Hard Rock Cafe scheduled to have its grand opening the coming week. But I had my sights on the Grand Concourse Restaurant in the old PL&E passenger station. That is a story for later in the week.

Monday was taken up with setting up for the many LCCA friends that would be arriving. Unpacking the computers, setting up the check-in area, un-boxing the special items all in due course. Oh yes, the sales table with all the LCCA goodies for sale! Picked up my convention packet all expertly done by the team with all the tickets for the tours I would be taking and oh yes the BANQUET! Being one of the first 400 pre-registering, I got one of the very special registration gifts of a Lionel trains gondola decorated for the convention. Beautiful!





Sure glad I registered early. I wandered over to the LCCA sales table and fell in love with the on-site car for this year – a special Dick Maddox Retirement boxcar with a portrait of ole Joshua Lionel Cowen on one side and Dick Maddox on the other. The Angela Trotta Thomas graphics were just perfect and would make this car a real treasure and only 250 to be had – 50 each day. Got to have one and when it was announced that Dick and Angela would be signing the cars on Saturday, I knew where I had to be that Saturday. Soon it would be time to get to bed – 4:30 AM would come pretty soon to be up, dressed, and have breakfast before leaving on the buses to the Amtrak station just minutes away.



Tuesday morning came all too early but this was going to be a trip of a lifetime. I was going to actually ride around horseshoe curve on a train! The breakfast buffet set-up by the Sheraton was just right, plentiful, and at \$9.99 – the right price. It was now 6 AM and the buses were ready to quickly transport us to the Amtrak station. As we pulled up to the station, its grandeur radiated. Before boarding the train, we got a chance to see the gorgeous station with its huge rotunda. I could only envision what it must have been like 60+ years before when steam still ruled the Pennsy and the Keystone state. My reminiscing

ended when I heard the call for the train to Altoona with an “All Aboard”.

Now it was our turn to get aboard the sleek silver Amtrak equipment headed by a beautiful Genesis locomotive. Altoona here we come! We had hoped to get out of the station before 7 AM and the Conrail freight heading east. Didn’t make it and that would be a problem just down the line. As we headed out of town for the most famous piece of railroad trackage in the US, the pace was slow and we got to see the backside of Pittsburgh. With a minor delay caused by a disabled Conrail freight train ahead of us, we arrived a little late into Altoona. In spite of the delay we made all of our scheduled stops. Seeing the magnificent Horseshoe curve was the jewel of the trip. At one time 4 tracks traversed the curve and it was said that a train passed every 15 minutes. A real engineering marvel it was! Before it was constructed, crossing the Allegheny Mountains was made possible only by Incline railway. And I would be actually riding the curve today twice – going and coming.

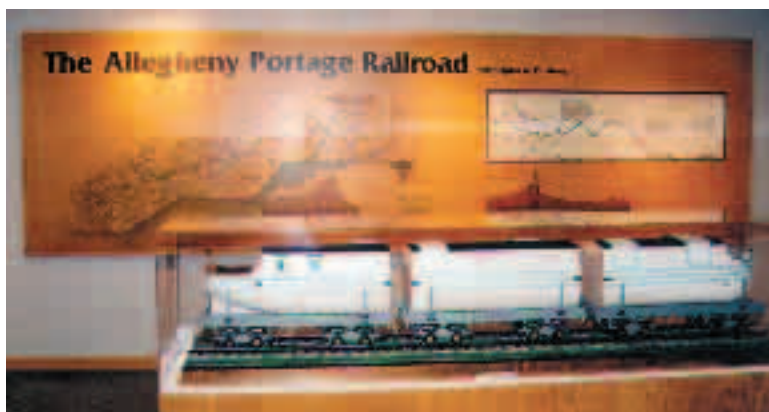
Arrival in Altoona was late but a nice lunch was awaiting us at our 1st tour stop. The group split into 3 segments with each one heading to a separate 1st stop. Ours headed to the curve and visitor center.

We would get to see it from a separate vantage point. As we pulled up and grabbed our lunch a short shower rained down to cool us all. But that could not stop this bunch of rugged train fans. Off we went to this historic site. A small museum at the bottom of the hill housed a theatre, which played a short movie on the curve, and other exhibits tracing the history of



the curve. Of course the gift shop was a must stop. But most of us wanted to get to the top of the hill and see some trains! You could walk or take a small incline car. We chose the incline up and the walk back down. Once at the top, you could only imagine what it must have been like in the hey day of steam. We saw a few diesel freights come by and were they impressive. displayed on the site was a retired Pennsy Geep that replaced a steam K4 that I had remembered the last time I had visited some 30 years before. Supposedly the K4 was being restored at another site.

Our next stop was the Allegheny Portage Incline Railway. Now a national historical site, they have preserved the few remains of this piece of history for scaling the Allegheny



Mountains. In the reconstructed engine house on one of the stops, we were able to observe the method of hoisting the loads up the mountain from one stop to the other. Some of the roadbed and rail was still in place.

Our last stop was at the Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum where the glorious history of this railroad town and its people are captured. I have been to some fine railroad museums but none to match the quality of this one. Four floors



greeted us and we had, it seemed only such a short time to see it all. The focus was on the people who built and maintained this piece of Pennsy mainline and the equipment that was used. Due to the high maintenance and support required for the curve and the trains that traversed her, Altoona became a large railroad center. Many steam engines were actually designed and built there as well as a large maintenance center. But in addition they built freight cars. Within the museum was also a very nice operating HO Layout depicting the Altoona area. O gauge dioramas depicted other scenes from Altoona's history. This is a must see for any Pennsy fan or rail fan in general. We heard while we were leaving that the museum's future was in question due to lower attendance than needed to support its operating costs. What a shame! Having completed our tours of the three sites, we had supper at McDonalds close to the Altoona Railroad Museum and then headed back to the train for the ride home. Thankfully, the ride back was uneventful and quick. Arriving back at the Sheraton at about 11 PM was a sure welcome site and off to bed.

The next day was a free one for my wife and me from the other tours. That evening along with some old and new friends, we headed to the Grand Concourse Restaurant just down the street for supper. What a place it was to have supper! It was supposedly the best place in Pittsburgh for seafood. I can't speak for the other places but it got my 1st place vote! Sitting in the main concourse room was an awesome experience full of ambience and elegance. One could only envision what this old PL&E station was like in its prime. I am sure the hustle of the Pittsburgh travelers thru this station was a site to behold. We saw a small glimpse of it as we went to the bathroom and were able to linger in a hallway adorned with photos from those years gone by just a little over a half century ago. The evening was wonderful – good food with good friends. Before calling it a night we decided to take one of the nearby inclines to the top of the hill overlooking Station Square and the city. It was a great view!

Bob Carter reports on the Wednesday tours: On Wednesday we hopped aboard a tour bus and checked out the Trolley Museum, just outside of Pittsburgh. Not only did we get to see and get on the trolleys, but ride them also. Hello, New Orleans in the 1900's. I could almost smell the Benigets and coffee in Jackson Square. You should have seen the smile on Al Otten's face. I swear he looked just like a kid again. OK, an OLD kid, but a kid just the





same. I think we all had that infectious look of regression and reliving those “good old days”. After reluctantly leaving the trolley museum we headed back into Pittsburgh, with its accompanying traffic congestion, to visit the Senator John Heinz Regional History Center. The city traffic threw our schedule off, so the time to visit the History Museum was cut short, but the time we had was quite memorable. The building that houses the museum was an old icehouse. I, for one, am glad to see cities beginning to reuse those old and well built structures and what better way than for a museum. The exhibits covered 250 years of the history of the Pittsburgh region.

There were interactive exhibits and artifacts that demonstrated everything from home and family life to transportation, industrial development, and political organizations. There was even a kitchen that I swear came out of our old house in Houston in 1948. Boy, the memories just flowed.



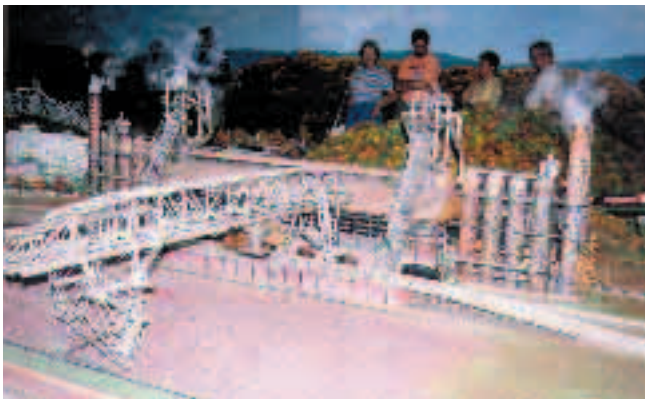
Larry Black continues: On Thursday we had the Carnegie Science Center on our schedule. Boarding a boat just adjacent to the hotel, we took a short trip across the river

and docked where we walked up a small hill to the museum. This was going to be an all “Lionel Day” at the museum.



Several Lionel seminars were planned along with touring the museum including a fine and very large Lionel operating layout, lunch, and an OmniMax movie. The first Lionel seminar was a review of new Lionel items being introduced. Many of these items would be on display starting Friday in the public display area. Hearing the Lionel team talk about the “new” things being introduced was very exciting. I was particularly excited about some of the new animation items like the sign painter. A 2nd seminar on TrainMaster was particularly interesting to me because I have not yet moved up to this new technology. They sure made it look easy! Now I’m ready. Lunch was a huge spread and no one went away hungry. It was outside with large hamburgers grilled right there along with all the fixings. One of the highlights of the museum is the Requiem Submarine that can be toured. Docked along side the river at the museum, a guided tour is a must! One can get a great appreciation for the hardships of submarine life after such a tour. During the afternoon we took in the large Lionel layout at the museum. It is designed for continuous operation of several trains with many more as static pieces.





What catches your attention though is the amount of animation and detail on the layout. I walked around it at least 7 times and never saw it all. Lights on a timer are set to simulate the time of day. Lights in buildings come on and off as well. There is a large city, steel mill area, countryside, amusement park, airport, ball field, industrial area, etc, etc. Even seasons are depicted across the layout. There is even a real river with water and boats navigating it on a continuous basis. It is gigantic! The animation is extremely detailed including a dog raising its hind leg to a photographer's flash. It was everywhere! You can't see Pittsburgh without visiting this museum. Well, the last call was sounded and we must head back to the hotel. As

we arrived back we were directed to a waiting truck to receive a surprise gift for each regular member on the tour from the friends at Lionel – a souvenir Requiem submarine flatcar made exclusively for that day. Only enough of these unique cars were produced to give one to each member attendee on this tour. It was beautiful. Nearby some entrepreneurs were already offering \$100 each for any takers. Not mine! That night some were already on eBay.

That evening was the traditional welcoming party – a top event at the LCCA conventions now. Bill Schmeelk, in his ever-warped way, again devised a crowd pleasing-ice breaker.



As we entered the room, we were given a small envelope. What was this inside? It turned out to be LCCA trading cards but I had all the same one. A set consisted of 12 different Lionel postwar catalog covers on one side and a face of the Lionel Lion on the other. It did not take long to figure out that only by trading with others who had different cards could I acquire a complete set. Who cared about the food that was spread from one end to the other? I was going to get my set first. After about 15 minutes of feverish

trading I had my set. Then I had to complete my wife's. Another 10 minutes. What a great way to meet people. Everyone loved it! Bob carter reports that it looked like a bunch of kids trying to get their favorite baseball players Fleeer Bubble Gum card. We all had a lot of fun and our THANKS go to Bill Schmeelk for his ingenious creativity.

Now I could eat. Boy was there food! Not hamburgers either. Everyone got stuffed. Not only was the food excellent,





it was also plentiful. Bob Carter's highlight was the freezers full of Klondike bars. More trading went on for those less anxious than I. There was live band music that eventually beckoned many to dance. Even my wife and I succumbed to the urge. During the evening there was also a tribute to Dick Maddox in recognition of his

retirement as well as greetings from the mayor of Pittsburgh. Before leaving though we had to have our free caricature drawn by a local artist over in the corner of the room. The line was long but we decided it would be worth it. It was loads of fun to see each couple get characterized.



Friday included the traditional Lionel seminar, annual business meeting, and public display area viewing before trading began that evening. Of course, Lionel was well represented in the display area and distributed their new catalogs, one to a customer after the Lionel seminar. Of course, there were lots of

questions and answers at the seminar. I was most impressed at the Lionel seminar with Lionel's new leader Bill Bracy. I found him forthright, talkative, and genuinely interested in what we collectors were thinking. He carried a notepad and attempted to capture every thought and comment during any one-on-ones. I learned by the end of the week that Bill is also an avid Lionel model train fan as well with a layout under construction in his new home.

The public display area had one of the most awesome layouts I have seen in quite a while. The Pittsburgh area Hi-Railers brought a large modular layout (about 80 feet long by 18 feet wide) with 3 track oval operation. In the middle was a large turntable with nearly \$30K worth of large steam setting ready for dispatch. Poised on the turntable was a Big Boy. A large 8-track yard for assembling trains stood between the turntable and the mainline. While I was there I observed a double headed new Lionel 2-10-2 tandem pulling a very large consist of freight cars effortlessly. Typical 50 car freight trains were not uncommon or 25 car passenger car trains in UP bright yellow during the running that afternoon. Pennsy steam and diesel power was everywhere. The layout had lots of detail



and was very well done. A huge Hell Gate bridge adorned one side of the layout standing probably 6 feet high and 20 feet long. Each member's module was really unique. These guys had fun too. Thanks fellows for sharing it with us.

The trading hall action started that evening. By now everyone was ready to buy trains. 3-2-1 ... let's go. The room was really crowded with lots of trains and Lionel blue and orange was everywhere with some purple too. I saw feverish activity at Lou Caponi's tables as well as many others. Tonight for me was just looking. Didn't have any specifics that I was looking for and besides I needed to man the table showing the LCCA website. During the evening I got to meet lots of

members, discuss the club's website, and upcoming plans for an on-line Interchange Track. As a result we got some good ideas and feedback.

Saturday morning and more trading. During a small lull my wife and I went shopping in the room. She had spotted a



Club founder Jim Gates CM 1, having his Maddox car autographed.





“girls” boxcar the night before that she knew our new granddaughter “had” to have. So she bought her 1st train item even if it wasn’t a Lionel. Later that morning I went to get in line to have my Maddox boxcar signed by both Dick and Angela. I decided to have the box signed by good friend Lenny Dean and a new friend Bill Bracy. If Joshua would have been there and Dick Kughn, I would have had them signed it as well. By the way I just noticed that several of these were selling on eBay for over \$200. With my new treasure in hand, I headed off to put it away for safekeeping. That afternoon a large public crowd came in and all I saw was bright \$mile\$ from most vendors. Lou’s table had been stripped almost bare. A great meet! It was now time to call it quits and get ready for the banquet.

The LCCA banquets have grown over the years to be a real draw and this one was no exception. Adding to the mystique was the fact that it was held aboard a riverboat. Earlier in the week I had signed up for a table close to the front. My



only criteria was that I wanted to be at a table with no one I knew. I have found this is to be a great way to meet new friends and fellow collectors that I would not otherwise get to know. I now have three new LCCA families to add to my collection of friends. The ride up and down the rivers of Pittsburgh offered a unique view of this home to the Steelers as we ate. I had salmon and it was delicious. I made a couple of trips to the silent auction but had no success there. After dinner there were the usual few short speeches. A special tribute was made to

Dick Maddox commemorating his retirement and thanking him for his special friendship with our club. Angela Trotha Thomas, the sweetheart of the LCCA, presented to Mr. Maddox, the original artwork used on the special Maddox-Cowen Box car.

The club also made a special presentation to Lionel’s new president, Bill Bracy. John Fisher, on behalf of our club presented him with a very special F3 AA set. The locos featured specially created shells in the Santa Fe war bonnet scheme. The roadname on the sides was Lionel Lines. In place of the usual GM logos was a special inscription that stated – Leased to Bill Bracy. Mr. Bracy later spoke a few words and we all felt just a little closer to this new leader of the Lionel tradition.

We soon docked and it was time to claim our door and raffle prizes back at the hotel. Everyone always gets something. As I entered the room it was stacked high with orange and blue door prizes - most compliments of Lionel. I claimed mine and assisted with the handout. It was now about 10 PM and the last door prize had been claimed. I was one tired puppy! Seemed hard to believe that another convention had come and gone. In the morning my wife and I would head home with a number of new treasures – couple of trains, some new found friends, reacquaintances with a number of old friends, loads of memories, and a new enthusiasm for getting my layout going.



As I put the fond memories of Pittsburgh to bed, it will not be long before time to think about Las Vegas and my 30th convention. Can’t wait to see what will be in store and to make my plans to be there. Hope I will see many of you there. I’ve been to Las Vegas many times on business but never on “train” business. It’s about time! Maybe there will be a train ride into California, a few of those famous garden railways to see, the Grand Canyon, and on and on. 🚂

Photographs by Ed Richtner and Bob Carter



EXTENDING YOUR CONVENTION VACATION

PART ONE

By Bob Carter

RM 6620

Editor's note: Bob Carter's vacation began by attending our annual convention in Pittsburgh, but it didn't end there. Bob found a way to continue his enjoyment of train related activities and has written a three-part article detailing them. A special thanks to Bob for sharing with our members some of the interesting, train related activities that extended his vacation. I'm sure many of our members will find it interesting and perhaps will plan a trip to some of the interesting places Bob and his wife visited on their way home from Pittsburgh.

I thoroughly enjoyed the Pittsburgh convention and I was a little reluctant to leave, what with all the train activity they have there. Checking my trusty Rand McNally though, and plotting our return trip to Marietta, GA, I noticed a few places that might make a worthwhile visit.

The first was The Cass Scenic Railroad State Park. I dare say that anyone interested in trains has heard of Cass and their Heisler, Climax and Shay locomotives. Living in Texas, and being a long way from West Virginia, has prevented us from taking advantage of this line, but since we will be traveling sooo close, I thought, why not? We made arrangements in Staunton, VA, home of the Statler Brothers by the way, to spend the night and set out across the mountains to Cass, WV. Let me tell you, Texas is

flatter than flat when it comes to West Virginia. The ride across the mountains was almost as exciting as the train ride we had when we got to Cass.

The Cass Scenic Railroad was built in 1901, and was used to haul lumber to the mill in Cass. What you are riding on and behind are the cars and locos that were used in Cass and the lumber industry for over 50 years. The passenger cars you ride in were old lumber flat cars that were refurbished into passenger cars.

The engines are still coal powered and hand shoveled and for a rail fan, it was like a trip back in time. Before we got on, we were able to see it come in, with the gears turning the wheels, the thick black smoke bellowing out of the stack and the mournful wail of the whistle echoing off the mountains. The engine stopped to take on water before arriving at the station to let off its passengers and take on some more. I spoke to the engineer and fireman briefly while they oiled and greased prior to leaving, and learned that the fireman feeds the

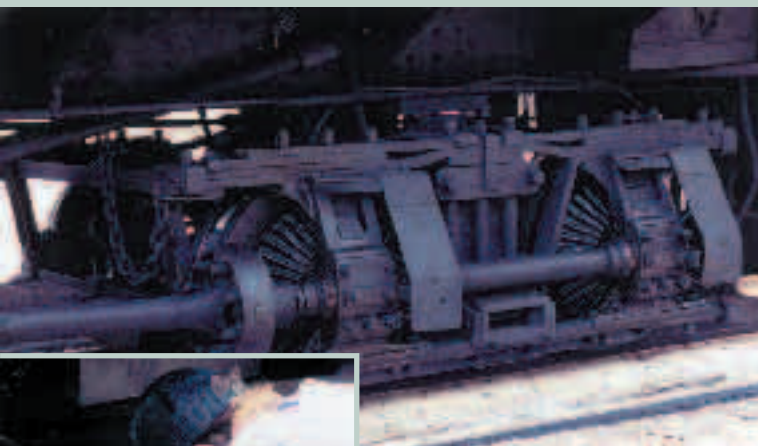
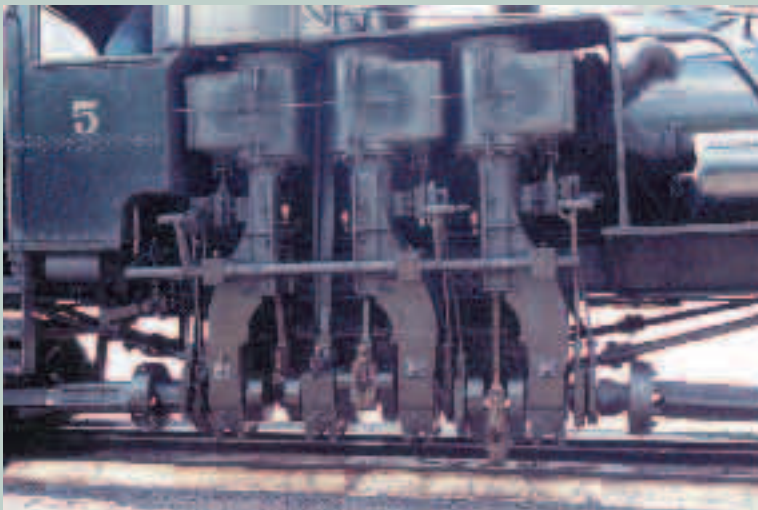
firebox with six shovelfuls of coal every 15 seconds. This is not a job for a weak back!

As we left the station, we passed, on the left, what appeared to be a graveyard of old and rusting equipment. Some old log cars, parts of engines and a logging crane took up most



of the trackage, while on the right side were remnants of the old saw mill and the current shop where the locomotives and cars are maintained and serviced. You pass through a forest of trees, up a grade to the first switchback. The switchman, a state park employee, hops off the lead car after it passes the switch and throws it for the next climb up the mountain. We go through two switchbacks, eventually climbing a grade of 11 percent. Remember, they tell us a steep grade for model railroading and conventional railroads is 2 percent. Well, this 11 percent grade was nothing for this little engine, and the weight it was pushing and pulling was nothing compared to what it used to handle with fully loaded log cars. The trip was slow and deliberate. If any of you have one of the Lionel or MTH Shays, run it prototypically to fully enjoy the geared wheel action.

We decided to take the two hour round trip to Whittaker Station instead of the four and a half hour round trip to Bald Knob. When we arrived at Whittaker Station, everyone got off and took the self-guided tour of a reconstructed logging camp. There were guides that answered our questions and explained what we were seeing. After what seemed like a too short



period of time, we climbed back aboard for the return trip to Cass. If you take the full four and one-half hour trip to Bald Knob, you would leave Whittaker, travel on up the mountain, take on more water at Oats Run and continue up the mountain until you finally reach Bald Knob. At 4,842 feet, Bald Knob is the second highest point in West Virginia. From the overlook you can see into two states and the climate, it is written, is like that of Canada. I guess next time we'll have to make time for the entire run, but having driven the mountains to be at Cass for the 3 pm ride, I wanted to be sure I was driving back in daylight.

Seeing up close and personal a real Shay, and understanding it's place in the growth of our nation, was a wonderful time well spent. We rode behind Shay No.5, which was built in 1905, and came to Cass new for the Greenbrier & Elk River, West Virginia Spruce Lumber Co. The engine weighs 86 tons and is 57 feet, 7 inches.

It uses 4 tons of coal and 5000 gallons of water daily.

I'm sure many of you have taken this side excursion to Cass, but for those of you that for whatever reason have been putting it off. You might want to consider allowing enough time and daylight to make this living piece of history part of your memory file. Our next stop is Roanoke, Virginia for a visit to the Virginia Transportation Museum. We'll cover that in part 2. 🚂

Photographs by Bob Carter

Commemoratives of our 32nd Family Reunion at Pittsburgh, PA.

by Contributing Editor Dennis Leon Clad RM 10430

Oh sure, I've attended a few of those committee planned conventions offered by other train clubs. I know the planners of those conventions really wanted me to have a good time, but I just didn't. You see I've been spoiled by LCCA conventions. The reason for this is simple. Our governing fathers work very hard to make sure LCCA convention attendees wear a smile. You bet LCCA conventions are just that great! Speaking for me, the best part of attending an LCCA convention is the sense of family and the fun of seeing old friends along with the opportunity to make new ones. If you twist my arm, I'll tell you a good meal away from home is awfully important. Well, our club fathers feel the same way. The icing on the cake for me are those great LCCA convention souvenirs. Now trust me on this one. No other toy train club offers convention attendees better commemoratives than the club with Lionel in its name, the Lionel Collectors Club of America.

To prove my bold statement please let me offer as evidence the souvenir Lionel rolling stock that debuted at our 32nd convention. Please tell me what other toy train club would give the first 400 registrants a specially decorated limited edition Lionel Car? This was in addition to the convention souvenir. Well that's



Happy says, You'll be happy too if you have his LCCA gondola in your collection.



No club but LCCA could offer such an attractive car as the Cowen / Maddox 6464-2002 boxcar.



This 6464 is a must have car for four collector groups.

just what LCCA did. The 6-17412 was originally offered by Lionel at their on-line store and is uncataloged. As our Lionel luck would have it, our club fathers were able to acquire from Lionel, 400 of these made in the U.S.A. gondolas and had them decorated with Happy, the Lionel Lion along with the LCCA 32nd annual convention notation. All 400 of the Happy Gondolas came equipped with Lionel's premium die cast sprung trucks. With Happy on our LCCA gondola this very special freight yard workhorse becomes a must have for three collector groups. Before you buy a 6-17412 from an online auction, question the seller to see if you're getting the real thing — a custom decorated LCCA Happy Gondola.

If you think our LCCA fathers couldn't top a free limited edition Happy gondola, well just wait till you see the on-site convention 6464 boxcar for 2002. Only 250 of these cars were made. The special 6464-2002 is a custom decorated 9700 series type Lionel boxcar. Painted under the car's doors between a pair of high end die cast sprung Lionel trucks is, LCCA On-Site Car Pittsburgh, PA 2002. This silver painted beauty with black doors has in the upper left corner, near the roof line, the car's number, 6464-2002. On one side of the car is a portrait of Joshua Lionel

Cowen, along with statement, *Founder Lionel Trains*. Under Mr. Cowen is the signature of the portrait's artist, Angela Trotta Thomas. To the right of Mr. Cowen is printed *From Cowen to Maddox A Century of Lionel Trains!* Above that statement is a black line for the artist's autograph.



A rare look at the oh so rare Lionel made LCCA On site convention car.

A tip-top job was done by Weaver Models and the decoration on this car is rivaled only by our beloved Lionel.

On the opposite side of the car, to the left of the door is a portrait of Lionel's Richard Maddox and the words, *President Lionel LLC 1999-2002*. Again under the portrait is the artist's signature. To the right of the door is printed, *From Cowen to Maddox The Legend Lives On!* Again, above the statement is a black line where you can have president Maddox autograph the car. Both president Maddox and Mrs. Thomas were available at our 2002 convention and were more than happy to autograph the car for our members.

Now I know what you're thinking, Dennis you can stop now as it can't get any better than the Happy gondola and the on site 6464 box car. Well, it can and does get better. The 6-52273 is a special car made by Lionel exclusively for our club and it commemorates Lionel Day at the Carnegie Science Center. This car is the oh so desirable Lionel USS Requin Submarine Car. This special gift was given only to LCCA regular members who attended the Thursday Carnegie Science

Center event of the convention. This Lionel made treasure has LCCA painted on a U.S. Navy flat car and like our first two LCCA souvenir cars, this flat comes equipped with Lionel's premium die cast sprung trucks. On the sub's tower, is painted the USS Requin's number 481. Painted on the sub's hull near the fan tail is the

Carnegie Science Center 10th anniversary logo. Even closer to the ship's fantail, just past the logo is painted *One of the Four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh*. The real USS Requin is one of the museum's exhibits and many of our members toured the sub. Because Lionel produced such a small number of the 6-52273 LCCA Submarine Car, its value will surely rise. On the box end flap, the 6- sku number is present along with the name of the car, which is the 2002 LCCA Pittsburgh Convention Special LCCA/On Site Carnegie Science Center Submarine Car.

If you were lucky enough to attend our LCCA 2002 family reunion and you have just one of the three souvenir cars, you can be sure there is collector interest in your car. Because of this interest, you can expect the value of these cars to increase. All this was in addition to two great convention cars that we'll cover next issue. Next summer, for a value packed family fun vacation, make it our LCCA Las Vegas convention. 🚂

Happy tracks, Dennis Leon Clad

Upcoming LCCA Train Meets

Lexington, Kentucky – Friday, November 29 & Saturday, November 30, 2002

Get a jump on the Holidays with some of the best train meet hosts in the business! Join co-hosts Harry Overtoom, Larry Black, Bill Crace, and Winfred Adkins on Friday, November 29 & Saturday, November 30, 200 at the Continental Inn in Lexington. The Inn is located at US 60 and New Circle Road (1.8 miles west on US 60 from I-75 Exit 110.)

Setup and Early Bird Trading starts on Friday, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. and is open to LCCA members only. Saturday members-only trading runs from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m., with public trading from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

LCCA members and family are free; Guests are \$3.50, with children under 12, free with an adult. Tables are \$15.00 each.

For more information, contact co-hosts Harry Overtoom, 859-268-1942; Larry Black, 502-695-4355; Bill Crace, 859-299-2423; and Winfred Adkins, 859-873-2497.

East Haven, Connecticut – Sat. & Sun., Nov. 30 thru Dec. 22 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Jim Boylan will be presenting the 0-72 and 0 gage operating Lionel train layout in a 103 year old real operating trolley car at the Shore line Trolley Museum, 17 River St., near the Green, East Haven, Conn. While regular museum admission will be charged, the experience includes heated trolley car rides, hot chocolate, cookies, and a visit with Santa, who will have a gift for each child. A limited number of passes are available by advance arrangement, for members who would like to bring trains to run on the unusual layout, or help run Jim's trains. Public transportation is near-by.

Call Jim Boylan (122 Monroe Ave.; Penndel, PA 19047-4058) at (215) SKYline 7-7444 for more information and directions. I will call you back if you leave your number on my answering machine. The museum phone is (203) 467-6927, but they won't be able to answer questions about passes. 🚂

There's a Lot More to Las Vegas than... Well, You Know.



LCCA members are prepared for the “Westward, ho!” trek to one of America’s premiere entertainment cities, meeting destinations, and tourist attractions. Nevada is “silver country,” and the memories of the Comstock Mine are evident in the flow and flash of silver dollars – the favored coin of the area.

The club’s convention hotel will be the Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino. Contrary to some edgy TV images about this fabled city, “The Strip” in Las Vegas is now more like a family-fun circus with free outdoor attractions like “The Volcano Eruption” and evening fireworks, great casino-based extravaganzas like “The White Tigers with Seigfreid and Roy,” and on-stage musicals starring popular singers and hit makers.

You and your family will enjoy professionally conducted tours in the area, the Get Acquainted Party with Series 2 Collector Cards, a collectible LCCA On-site Convention Car, and much more.

Mark your calendar for July 22-27, 2003, for the best club convention in the West – or anywhere else! Early birds may make room reservations now at 1-888-684-3746; be sure to ask for the “LCCA CONVENTION SPECIAL RATE. Call now because we expect the host hotel to fill up quickly. Information, photos, and registration and reservation forms for use with the LCCA 2003 Annual Convention will be presented in the next issue of *The Lion Roars*.

See you on the Ponderosa. Yahoo!

L I O N E L[®]



S E R V I C E S T A T I O N S E T S

Dennis DeVito

LCCA 6758

If you wish to understand marketing and would like to learn how it works in the real world, study the marketing strategies of Lionel. Over the years, the Lionel Marketers have responded to market conditions and in most cases, did so by taking different solutions to what was at that time a troubling issue. This marketing expertise seems to carry over through the various managers and owners who were responsible for the Lionel Product Line.

An underlying marketing principle is that no matter how good your product is, IT MUST SELL to be successful. Model Electric Trains are no exception. And a corollary to this principle is that if the product requires service and a market presence, you must provide for this activity.

The folks at Lionel faced many challenges in 1970 when the Fundamenions Group (MPC) purchased the line. Neglect and indifference reduced product demand, and product offerings were slim. Starting with MPC in 1970, products and choices were improved, but the traditional marketing channels (local hobby shops) were unwilling and unable to sustain the Lionel Line alone. The development of the discount store and the lower selling price of product offered at these discount outlets came at the expense of the full service hobby shop. A hobby shop, with limited sales volume and the premium cost of operating a store and providing service, required asking a higher price from customers. This price differential between hobby shop and other outlets was aggravated by the lower cost the discounters were able to get because of their greater volume purchases. Too many customers were utilizing the hobby shop for their services, services, but were flocking to lower cost outlets, swaps and mail order for their purchases.

As a result of these developments and the popularity of train shows and swap meets during the early 1970's which offered deep discounts on product, the hobby shops were unable to maintain a margin which would keep them in business. They were therefore unwilling to commit their efforts to the Lionel product.

Lionel responded to this by offering a specific high value train set exclusively to retail hobby shops, folks with a

storefront and a permanent layout display. This would allow the retail hobby shops to offer a unique product to customers at a price close to retail without direct competition from discount sources. Lionel introduced the first set in 1971, calling it a Service Station Set and limiting its sale to select retail outlets.

These sets started innocently enough. the first few years' sets were made from existing cars and were merely a repackaging of items offered for individual sale. But with time (starting with set 1350), Lionel modified its strategy and offered sets for sale with items which would not be offered in other sets or for individual sale. This product differentiation and selectivity considerably enhanced the perceived value of the Service Station Set.

Lionel wisely offered a top-drawer selection for this first unique set, the Canadian Pacific F3 set. The following year the Rio Grande F3 was offered. And with this exciting introduction, subsequent years offered other sets which immediately became sought after collectables. This made that a high value item for the dealer.

The Service Station Set series was halted from 1978 to 1986. This was a marketing driven action. The series was offered again in 1986. As a point of interest, this was the year after Lionel offered the Hudson and a few scale O gauge cars for sale DIRECT from the factory to the consumer. As you may recall, this direct sale (itself a result of seller abuse) took sales away from retailers. If left unabated, a direct sales program will drive customers away from other sales outlets, especially the hobby shops. Lionel did not offer other direct sales items, but it is interesting to note that the Service Station Sets started the same year that retailers expressed their extreme dissatisfaction with Lionel's direct to the consumer marketing strategy. Could the revival of the Service Station Sets be an olive branch from Lionel to retailers in the 1986 year?

Service Station Sets have been offered each year since 1986. Prior to 1996 the SSS were announced with a separate advertising page and were not pictured in the catalog. After all, these sets were only sold to registered Lionel Service Stations. These individual catalog sheets are hard to find today and make a neat collectable for those who cherish Lionel paper.

Starting in 1996, the SSS were included in at least one of the major catalogs offered each year. Catalog presence is noted in the table listings.

Lionel has respected the SSS sets, offering true value. The product is quite good, with colorful graphics, high-end couplers and trucks, and quite a bit of variety. Prior to 1998 the sets retailed at less than \$400 and many are considerably less than that today. The sets offer low to mid-range motive power and most are the equivalent to post war type product. They are all complete sets (no track or transformer) and all have at least one engine.

It is easy to overlook the SSS sets as you covet the rest of the Lionel Line. Perhaps after the 20 year run, a review of the sets offered will suggest a very nice collection. If one could choose only one set from each year, if it was the SSS sets, the resulting items would make one proud. The SSS truly represent the spirit of the postwar period, with a series of dependable, high quality, reasonably priced items with substantial play value.

Below are some statistics on the Service Station Sets. If you have a comment or question or which to offer a correction, please contact me directly at 616-428-2636 or at omerion@parrett.net

Addendum – A number of members have commented on the article I submitted last issue and have indicated that there was a third “I Love New York” car offered around 1998. A special market run of 500 cars was included in a Bloomingdale’s promotional set. This car, number #15005, while in the “I Love America” motif should not be considered a part of the “I Love America” series because of its special origins and its limited distribution. A member also pointed out that the descriptions listed for the North and South Carolina cars were reversed. 🚂

Notes

1. Where not shown in catalog, Manufacturer’s Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) was estimated as shown
2. Current pricing referenced from 2002 Greenberg
3. B-unit (#8469) offered for separate sale in 1974
4. #8764 powered passenger and #8765 dummy passenger offered for separate sale later
5. Safety Caboose and Ladder Car came out in 1999 preview — were these part of the 1998 set??? Or just separate sale.
6. Bethlehem gondola car came out in 1998. Was this a pre-SSS car???

| Catalog Number | SSS Set Name | Footnote | Year Released |
|----------------|--|----------|---------------|
| 1187 | Illinois Central — (GP9) | | 1971 |
| 1250 | NYC — (small Hudson) | | 1972 |
| 1350 | Canadian Pacific Set — (F3) | 3 | 1973 |
| 1450 | Denver Rio Grand — (F3) | | 1974 |
| 1579 | Milwaukee Road — (F3) | | 1975 |
| 1672 | Northern Pacific — (GP-9) | | 1976 |
| 1766 | Budd Cars | 4 | 1977 |
| 1868 | M&St. Paul — (GP-9) | | 1978 |
| | No SSS Set Issued | | 1979 |
| | No SSS Set Issued | | 1980 |
| | No SSS Set Issued | | 1981 |
| | No SSS Set Issued | | 1982 |
| | No SSS Set Issued | | 1983 |
| | No SSS Set Issued | | 1984 |
| | No SSS Set Issued | | 1985 |
| 1632 | Santa Fe Work Train — (steam switcher) | | 1986 |
| 11704 | Southern Freight Runner — (GP-9) | | 1987 |
| 11706 | Dry Gulch Line — (General) | | 1988 |
| 11758 | The Desert King — (small hudson) | | 1989 |
| 11712 | Great Lakes Express — (small hudson) | | 1990 |
| 11719 | Coastal Limited | | 1991 |
| 11733 | Feather River — (GP-9) | | 1992 |
| 11738 | Soo Line — (GP38-2) | | 1993 |
| 11744 | NYC Passenger/Freight — (RS-3) | | 1994 |
| 11749 | Western Maryland — (GP-20) | | 1995 |
| 11912 | Steel Ore Cars | | 1996 |
| 11918 | Conrail — (SD-20) | | 1997 |
| 21753 | Fire Rescue Train | 5,8 | 1998 |
| 21758 | Bethlehem Steel | 6 | 1999 |
| 21952 | Service Station Special — (C-420) | 9 | 2000 |
| 21789 | NS Flat Car Set — (GP-9) | 9 | 2001 |
| 28200 | U30C Diesels | 7,8,9 | 2002 |
| | | | |

7. Offered in three different road names — there were no matching cars offered in 2002
8. Command Control
9. Current pricing estimated by author

The Mane Line

by Dennis Leon Clad

RM 10430

Editor's Note: Our contributing editor Dennis Clad is a wonderfully enthusiastic Lionel collector and he is a valued member of our Lion Roars team. The opinions, recommendations and commercial endorsements contained in The Mane Line are those of the writer and do not constitute an endorsement or approval of those items by LCCA, its officers or directors. This information is provided to our members in order to educate, inform and yes, entertain. Any decision to make any purchase based on this information should only be done after careful consideration and with full knowledge of market conditions.

As I enter my mid-fifties, I must confess there are a number of things that I've given up hope of ever happening. One of those things that I've lost all hope for is hair returning to the top of my head. Another lost cause would have to be the fact that I'll never be vascular, or what body builders call chiseled. If I were to pick just one thing that the flame of hope

four dogs and six cups of Pepsi, I said goodbye to my friend of seventeen years and left the lot in a new car.

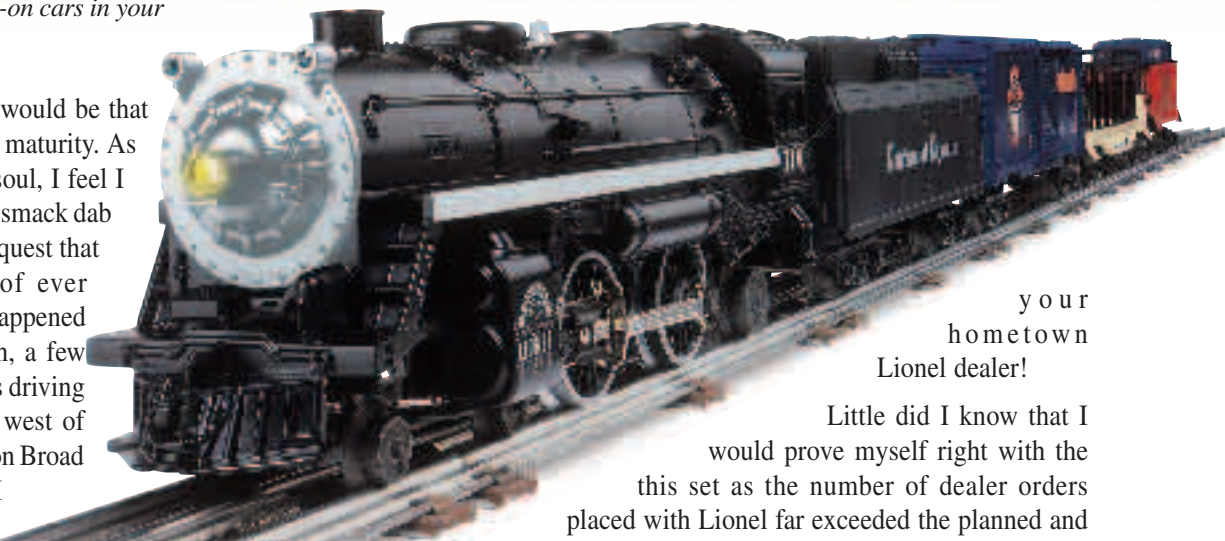
Maybe because of this detour on the road to adult maturity that I find myself traveling is the reason I love Lionel TOY trains so much. Oh sure I'm full of respect for Lionel scale trains, after all they are the world's best example of machine tooled art, but it's the Lionel toy trains in my collection that really capture and hold my heart. In this edition of *The Mane Line*, we'll look at a Lionel toy train set that has not only tugged at my heart, but the hearts of so many collectors. What's so surprising is the fact that this set is cataloged and the 2000 sets made far exceeded the magic number of 750. Yes, I can only be speaking of 6-21976, the Lionel Centennial Express.

The year 2000 seems like a lifetime ago, but I can still remember the day I received via U.S. Mail, my 2000 Lionel catalog from Barry's Train Shop in Pennsylvania. It would be on page four that my heart began pounding and my eyes looked lustfully for the first time at the Lionel Centennial Express. I knew in an instant that the promotional set which honors the maker of the world's greatest promotional sets had to be mine. So I called my dealer, Barry Keener, RM 728, to place my order. As my Lionel luck would have it, Barry knows me better than I know myself and had already earmarked a set for me. I've said it before and I'll say it again — it pays to be true to



Just imagine the five add-on cars in your train.

still burns bright for, it would be that one day I'll reach adult maturity. As long as I'm baring my soul, I feel I should tell you that I ran smack dab into a roadblock on my quest that made me lose hope of ever achieving my goal. It happened on a Saturday afternoon, a few short weeks ago as I was driving old Bucky Bronco just west of the Confederate capital on Broad Street. No sooner had I left the city limits when I spotted, off to my right, the one thing that was guaranteed to lure me into a new car dealership — a giant inflated gorilla. No sooner had I parked Bucky than I found myself at the refreshment booth with free hot dogs (the good kind, boiling in red water) and specimen cups of Pepsi. It would seem that someone at this car lot would know my weakness. It was like I was caught in a rift of the time-space continuum and was completely powerless. So after



your
hometown
Lionel dealer!

Little did I know that I would prove myself right with the this set as the number of dealer orders placed with Lionel far exceeded the planned and published number of sets Lionel would make. Sadly, many dealers had their orders for the Lionel 100th birthday train cut, and I mean cut big time.

Before I cover the three cataloged and two uncataloged add-on cars for this set, let's take a look at the set itself, beginning with the locomotive that heads up our train. The design team at Lionel could not have picked a better engine to pull our anniversary train than that warhorse of the three-rail

track, a die cast 4-4-2. The trim for our steamer as well as the tender lettering is done in silver. Even the boiler front and catwalk received a coat of this very special silver. The number 100 appears under the cab windows but what really sets off this loco is the 100th birthday *Engineer Some Fun* logo in silver on the steam chests. Wow what a dressed-up 4-4-2! Our train would be incomplete without a boxcar and Lionel didn't let us down. The boxcar included in the set is a 9700 series type dressed up in corporate Lionel orange and blue. To the left of the door is the *Engineer Some Fun* logo and to the right of the door is *100 Years of Railroading Fun*.

The second car in the set is a flat car with stakes and bulkheads. Again, the 100th birthday logo is stamped on the car. Ask any toy train collector and they will tell you that no train is complete without a caboose. Again, Lionel didn't let the collector down as our train comes with a SP type caboose trimmed in two colors and stamped with Lionel's most attractive 100th birthday logo. The set comes complete, ready to run with track and transformer.

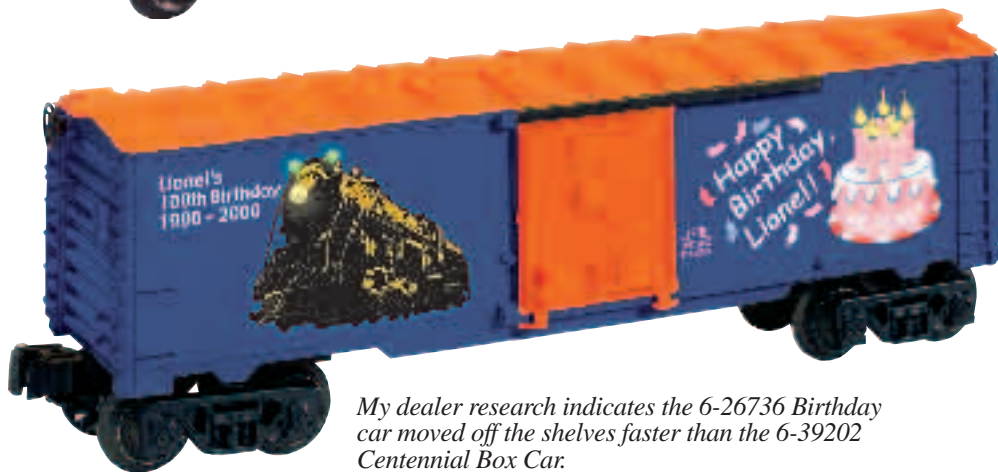
The only disappointment in the set is the undecorated tractor trailer. I really feel that it should have been decorated to match the boxcar. Please Lionel, it's not too late to correct this oversight.

Now let's take a close look at the five add-on cars for our highly collectable set. The first three add-ons to our set are cataloged, but don't be fooled into thinking that these three gorgeous boxcars can be easily found. Like all of the rest of the Lionel items in the 2000 catalog, they have become desirable for both sentimental and historical reasons. For you see, lovingly placed between the covers of both year 2000 catalogs is real treasure – the last made in America Lionel.

The Lionel Centennial boxcar 6-39202, appeared only once on pages 56 and 57 in the 2000 Lionel Classic Trains, Volume 1 catalog. The car has all the 6464 features and is painted with blue sides and gold roof, doors, and ends. Of the three add-on boxcars, the Lionel Centennial boxcar is the only freight mover to proudly carry the 100th birthday logo and it is



The Lionel Centennial Box Car 6-39202 is a must own for two collector groups.



My dealer research indicates the 6-26736 Birthday car moved off the shelves faster than the 6-39202 Centennial Box Car.



The 6-2928 Centennial 6464 Box Car is a must own for at least four Lionel collector groups.

pad printed in gold. What makes this car even more desirable is the fact that it is also an add-on car to the coveted Joshua Lionel Cowen train from 1982.

The Lionel Birthday car, 6-26736 appeared with the 6-39202 for one time only. The Birthday car is a lighted 9700 series boxcar with die cast trucks and operating couplers. What makes this Birthday car so special is that the candles on the cake light up, as do the headlight and marker lights on the Hudson. This car did not appear on dealer shelves at the same time as the 6-39202. It would be many months afterwards

before Lionel lovers could get their hands on this highly prized illuminated birthday car.

Our last add-on boxcar is the 6-29298, Lionel Centennial 6464 boxcar. I have a gut feeling that Lionel did not produce this car in large numbers. Our Centennial 6464 boxcar would appear just once in the 2000, Volume 2 catalog on page 28. What makes matters worse is that not only does this car have a low production number, but it is also a must own for those who collect the 6464 boxcar series, those who own the 1983 Lionel Lines orange and blue set, and finally for owners of the 6-21976 Lionel Centennial set. You know what? We can add another Lionel collector group to that list – the brave collectors who own the four Lionel Corporation orange and blue boxcars, which have been affectionately nicknamed the Blue Boys series.

If you think our three cataloged boxcars were hard enough to obtain, well, our two uncataloged add-ons might just make you give up all hope of completing your Centennial Express set. These are both clear shell cars. But please don't give up as this very special train set is worth all of your efforts to complete. The 6-26115 was only offered on Lionel's website store in the fall of 2000. Our Lionel Birthday confetti tank car disappeared almost over night from Lionel's store. This clear shell tanker came with a large bag of confetti for the car's owner to pour into the tanker. The tanker's hatch cover was packaged separately in its own plastic bag. With the hatch cover came the warning NOT to remove it after you fill with confetti as it could break. Be sure that if you buy your tanker on the secondary market, that the bag of confetti and the hatch cover are in your box with the tanker. The 6-26115 confetti tank car proudly displays Lionel's 100th Birthday banner to the left of the car's metal ladder.

The last add-on car to your set is again a clear shell tank car with confetti. The 6-26127 is the Wellspring tank car and



The 6-26115 Confetti tanker was a sellout on the Lionel website. Be sure the one you buy has the sealed package of confetti and the hatch cover.



The 6-26127 Wellspring Tanker Car was distributed to Lionel employees.



This gift card greatly increases the value of the 6-26127.

it was designed and created for Lionel's parent company, Wellspring. Like the 6-26115, the Wellspring version has Lionel's 100th Birthday logo to the left of the car's metal ladder. The Wellspring version also has *Happy Holidays* to the right of the ladder, while the 6-26115 has *Celebrate* to the right of its ladder. The Wellspring version boasts its logo on the tanker end caps. The Wellspring Happy Holidays confetti tank car will be the hardest for you to obtain, but is worth all of your collecting efforts. A gift card also accompanies the Wellspring tanker. To date, Lionel employees who attended the 2001 Employee Christmas party at Lionel headquarters are the lucky owners of this tanker, as one was given to each of them as they left the party.



See the 6- sku number of the set on the dealer flyer in the 10 'o clock position.

Please Pull Up a Chair As Class is in Session

The phone calls and letters are still coming in months after I covered the 1997 Lionel Little League promotional set. A great many of you have told me that you have the set but had no idea how great and memorable the set is. Many collectors have told me that they traded or sold their Little League set and are now sorry that they let this great set slip from their collections. Keep in mind if you're a boomer like me, made in the USA Lionel is something from our childhood that is gone. Please think twice before you sell or trade your Mount Clemens trains.

Lionel paper collectors have shown a big interest in all of the paper pertaining to the Lionel Little League promotion. There is a gondola full of confusion over the dealer flyer for the uncataloged set and the countertop display sign that was made by Lionel and sent to the Little League divisions for a team fundraiser. Our first photo shows the dealer flyer. Look at the 10 o'clock position on the flyer and you will see the set's 6- sku number. Below that is the line, *The Only Lionel Train Set*, and below that, the Little League logo.

The second photo shows the display sign. At the 10 o'clock position you can see the word WIN! In bold letters was added and the set's sku number was dropped. The Little League logo is also bolder on the contest display sign. This sign is worth all of your collecting efforts and it looks so good when displayed in your train room — especially with your Little League train set.



On the contest sign, note the bold WIN in place of the sku number.

Lionel Licensee Alert

If you haven't ordered your set of helicopters in Lionel orange and blue from Taylor Made Trucks, please don't wait until they're sold out. The die cast choppers decorated in Lionel colors, come in very attractive Lionel boxes and make a great addition to our LCCA Stocking Stuffer Airport. A pair is priced at \$19.95 plus shipping and tax. You can order them direct through Taylor Made at 1-800-685-0333.

In Closing

It's back to uncataloged sets and cars for the December issue of *The Mane Line*. Our beloved Lionel has created some great sets that have collectibility built right in. I can't wait to share them with you. 🚂

Happy Tracks, Dennis Leon Clad

REAL OR Whimsy?

by **R. E. Lee Hamilton**

RM 10990

Lionel's No. 6512 Cherry Picker car, No. 3413 Mercury Capsule Launching car, No. 6413 Mercury Capsule Carrying car, No. 6463 Rocket Fuel Tank Car and No. 6407 Flat Car with Missile and Removable Mercury Capsule — are they modeled after prototypical railroad cars or are they whimsical?

All five of the Project Mercury inspired Lionel space age themed cars were introduced during the “space craze” fever sweeping the country between 1961-1963. The advances realized by the Atlantic Missile Range rocketeers were daily front-page news and were eagerly discussed at the family breakfast table, school and the office. On May 5, 1961 America's efforts to send a man in space would be rewarded with Alan B. Shepard's successful Project Mercury sub-orbital space flight. What followed was President Kennedy's address to challenge America and the space program to place a man on the moon by the end of the decade. John H. Glen's Earth orbiting space flight on February 20, 1962 would continue to allow America to step closer to realizing that dream. Lionel was quick to recognize that keeping pace with the toy market driven desires of American children and their families was the key to survival. 1962 was a banner year of production for Lionel “Space & missile” collectors as Lionel kept

abreast of the ever-present space race by continuing to develop electric trains, “As timely as tomorrow” with the introduction of the regular issue catalogued No. 6512 Cherry Picker Car, the No. 3413 Mercury Capsule Launching car, No. 6413 Mercury Capsule Carrying Car along with the No. 6463 Rocket Fuel Tank Car. The remaining Project Mercury themed No. 6407 Flat Car with Missile and Removable Mercury Capsule, however, was introduced in 1963.

Believe it or not, the No. 6512 Cherry Picker car seems to have been modeled after a real piece of ground support equipment used during the Mercury Project Manned Space Program between 1961-1963. The No. 3413 Mercury Capsule launching car could probably be assumed to be pure fancy!

Both the #6413 Mercury Capsule Carrying car and #6407 Flatcar with Missile and Removable Mercury Capsule are somewhat feasible. No evidence has been discovered to support that the Mercury Capsule Carrying car was modeled after prototypical rolling stock used by the railroad. However, conventional and specially designed flatcars were both utilized to transport the Redstone missile used by Mercury Project. Super cooled liquefied Hydrogen gas (H₂) for rocket fuel could indeed be transported in railroad tank cars – However, a self sustaining, independently controlled chilling unit would be



necessary to maintain the low temperatures needed to maintain the liquid state.

The No. 3413 Mercury Capsule Launching Car is depicted in the 1962 regular issue Lionel catalog on page 32 & 33 with the following description:

“New! Mercury Capsule Launching Car – Ready to conquer “new horizons”! Mounted on a railroad car is a high powered missile ready to “boost” a Mercury Capsule by remote control. At a specific height after launching, missile falls back to earth and Mercury Capsule continues to soar. At its peak height Mercury Capsule turns upside down and descends back to earth slow and gracefully through the use of a parachute.”

The idea of the Lionel No. 3413 Mercury Capsule Launching Car boosting a Mercury capsule from a railroad car to descend back to the hard earth surface might not have been too far fetched back in 1962! In the early developmental days of Project Mercury, it was anticipated to allow for both land and water recovery of the capsule. A cushioned hard landing impact device was conceived as part of the capsule recovery package, coupled with an astronaut “cushioned” couch, to absorb boost, reentry and landing loads. The capsule was also designed to be buoyant and stable for water landing until the recovery crew frogmen could install a flotation collar. The Lionel car utilizes a booster

with the U. S. Air Force “star and bar” insignia – clearly identifying it as an Atlas type rocket, which was a U. S. Air Force Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) and the only Air Force rocket used to boost Mercury Capsules. Project Mercury utilized the Atlas booster to evaluate the structural, life support and recovery system capability of the Mercury capsule from July 1960 through November 1961. The final four Mercury Project manned Earth orbital launches all utilized the Atlas booster from 1962 through 1963.

On page 33 of the 1962 catalog is also depicted the No. 6512 Cherry Picker Car with the following description:

“New! Cherry Picker Car – An essential part of any space launching! Ladder which can be raised and extends holds a compartment that houses an astronaut. By turning a knob, Astronaut swivels out into full view. Cherry Picker can be used with the Mercury Capsule Launching Car to give the effect that an astronaut is being loaded into the capsule.”

As will be seen later in this article, I believe the Cherry Picker to be the most life like of all the Project Mercury inspired Lionel manned space themed electric train cars.

Also on pages 32 and 33 of the 1962 catalog is an eleven panel black and white line drawing depicting the action sequence of the “NEW AND EXCITING LIONEL “SPACE AGE” ACTION CARS”: The No. 3413 Mercury Capsule Launching Car, No. 6512 Cherry Picker Car and also introduced in 62, the No. 3619 Reconnaissance Copter Car. Clearly, Lionel wanted to fully showcase their newly designed



multi-functional action cars to an eager market – the “spaced crazed” American youth!

Continuing on page 34 of the 1962 catalog is depicted the No. 6413 Mercury Capsule Carrying Car with the following description:

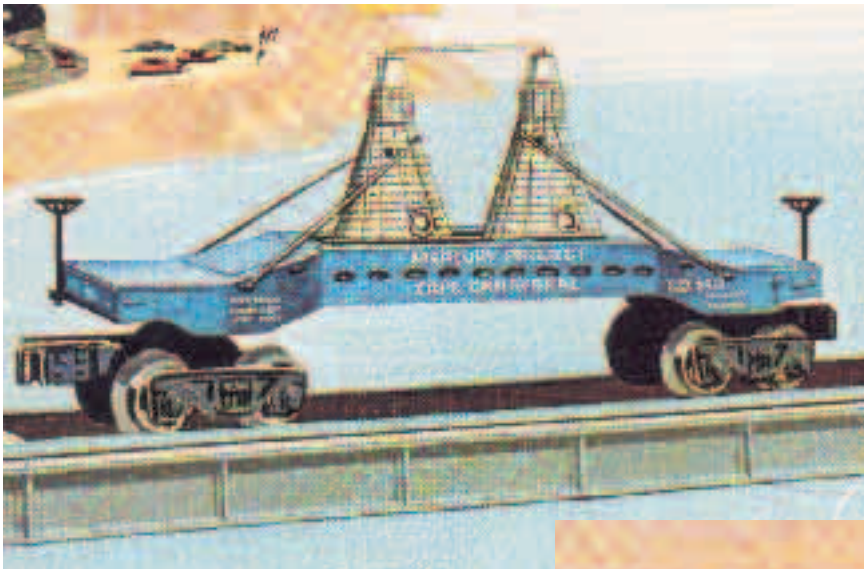
“New! Mercury Capsule Carrying Car – On their way to the launch site! Loaded on a flat car are two Mercury capsules ready to take a man into outer space. Capsules look like those used in real space launchings!”

No sources of information have been uncovered regarding rail transport of the Mercury capsules from fabrication facilities to the launch site as most of the surviving historical archival records for Project Mercury deal with booster and

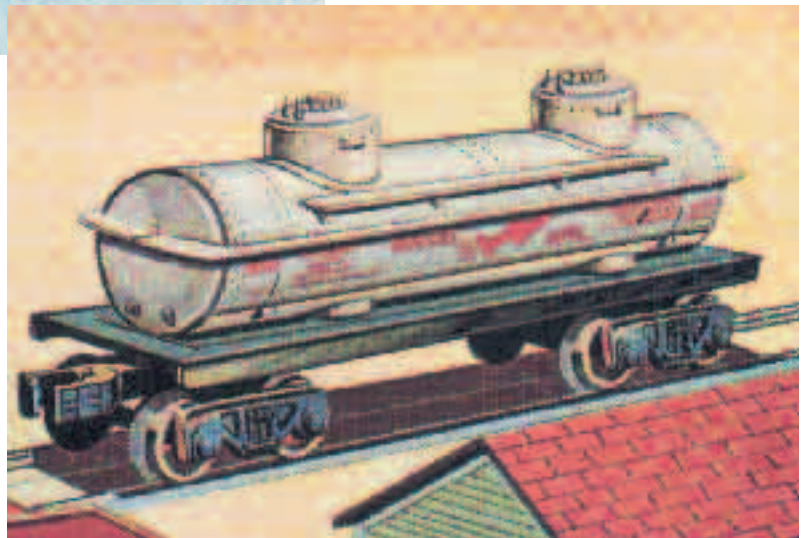
On page 35 of the 1962 catalog, also worthy of note in this study of Project Mercury inspired Lionel cars, is depicted the No. 6463 Rocket Fuel Tank Car with a description which reads:

“New! Rocket Fuel Tank Car – No missile could be launched without its supply of essential rocket fuel! Brightly colored in white with red markings. A real “missile age” railroad accessory with minute detailing.”

Undoubtedly, highly explosive, super cooled liquefied gaseous Hydrogen (H₂) for rocket fuel use (as denoted on the Lionel tank car sides) was transported on America’s railroad lines. It must be assumed that the Lionel Rocket Fuel Tank Car utilizes an unseen refrigeration unit to maintain a controlled low constant temperature used to increase gas density, thereby, enabling more Hydrogen to be carried in the tank car. The cooling unit is necessary in order to sustain the liquefied state while the tank car is in transit. If the Hydrogen is not maintained at a super cooled state, but allowed to increase in temperature, an explosion may result due to pressure build-up. For this reason, fully “fueled” Lionel Rocket Fuel tank cars should be given top priority and not be allowed to sit on a siding unattended but should be swiftly delivered to its destination – unless it is being handled as an empty. Interestingly, also



capsule system development. However, a record documenting the airlifting of the Mercury-Redstone 2 capsule from the Army Ballistic Missile Agency at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama following checkout to the Atlantic Missile Range (AMR), Florida exists. No records have been discovered to support confirmation of rail transport of either the flight design McDonnell Aircraft Corp. produced capsules or the NASA, Langley produced full-scale “boiler plate” Mercury test capsules to the AMR.



depicted on the tank car sides is the unmistakable silhouette of the 2-staged Nike-Hercules U.S. surface-to-air missile. What makes this interesting is that both the Nike booster and Hercules sustainer were both propelled with solid rocket fuel motors! Since 1958 the Nike-Hercules nuclear warhead tipped missiles were defending major cities throughout the U. S. – a role that would continue until 1974. Exactly why liquid hydrogen was chosen to be transported in the Lionel Rocket Fuel tank car is anyone’s guess. The Mercury Project Redstone booster utilized liquid oxygen (LOX) and ethyl alcohol while the Atlas booster used LOX and hydrocarbon Rocket Propellant 1 (RP-1). The first rocket to use Hydrogen rocket fuel with LOX oxidizer would be the Centaur second stage of the Atlas-Centaur space research vehicle launched from the AMR on May 8, 1962. This launch attempt resulted in an explosion of the Centaur second stage shortly after liftoff. After a considerable failure analysis and redesign effort a second Atlas-Centaur rocket was launched on November 27, 1963 that resulted in the first successful liquid Hydrogen fueled rocket to take flight and reach Earth orbit. The Atlas-Centaur rocket was designed to deliver heavy payloads to Earth orbit and played an active role in delivering instrumented probes to the Moon surface preparing the path for future Project Apollo landings.

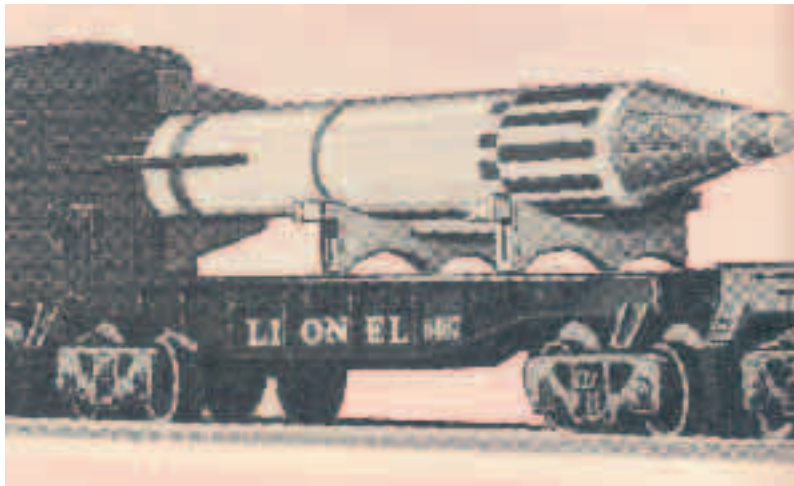
After 1962, the only remaining Lionel Project Mercury themed car to be released would be the 1963 introduced No. 6407 Flat Car with Missile and Removable Mercury Capsule. In the 1963 regular issue catalog, the page 29 description reads:

“New! No. 6407 Flat Car with Missile and Removable Mercury Capsule – Carried onboard a railroad flat car is a mighty missile ready to take an astronaut into outer space.”

The No. 6407 “missile” body with a cruciform fin design and checkered patterned front section with removable Mercury Capsule is an exact, although toy-like (remember – this is a toy for gosh sakes!), copy of the Mercury-Redstone rocket and capsule! The checkered pattern (black and white on the prototype & red and white on the Sterling Plastics produced rocket used by Lionel) portion of the rocket was an elongation to the Redstone booster necessary for a fuel tank extension and pressurized instrument section containing control, sensing and abort systems along with the Mercury capsule adapter. The checkered patterns are used on rockets to detect rotation

and act as easily identifiable markings for visual and camera tracking.

While the Project Mercury Redstone rocket with capsule was never transported on rail cars, the Mercury Medium Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM) was capable of being transported by rail. The highly maneuverable conventional or atomic warhead Redstone MRBM tactical missile system including



launching, fueling, hoisting crane and auxiliary equipment could all be loaded and transported by air, ship, truck and rail with field armies and be readied for launch under battlefield conditions. Rail transport of the trailer trucked missile stages and warhead with all support equipment was facilitated by piggy-back conventional trailer on flat cars and the newly developed “Clejan” center sill railroad cars. The first documented rail shipment of a Redstone MRBM, with truck transporter aboard a Clejan flatcar, was on September 25, 1959.

Project Mercury was the first U.S. effort developed to verify multi-operational spacecraft systems in delivering a man in space and ultimately to the moon. Many different rockets were used by the recently created (October 1, 1958) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) between 1959-1963 to validate the individual Project Mercury systems - namely: Blue Scout, Little Joe I, Atlas Big Joe, Redstone and Atlas. The two man-rated programs, all launched from the AMR in Cape Canaveral, Florida, were the Mercury-Redstone and Mercury-Atlas. Mercury-Redstone utilized the U. S. Army Redstone MRBM to propel the Mercury capsule to a non-orbital ballistic flight. While Mercury-Atlas used the U. S. Air Force Atlas ICBM in order to deliver the Mercury capsule to Earth orbit. However, even with both rockets having a high standard of reliability, significant modifications and testing was necessary in order to transform the Redstone MRBM and Atlas ICBM into reliable man-rated spacecraft boosters.

The unmanned first Mercury-Atlas 1 (MA-1) was launched July 29, 1960 which resulted in an explosion of the Atlas rocket 65 seconds after lift-off.

The first unmanned Mercury-Redstone 1 (MR-1) launch was attempted on November 21, 1960 that resulted in the rocket lifting a few inches before the booster shut down and the rocket resettling on the launch pad. This resulted in the Mercury Capsule escape tower being activated but the Capsule remained in place atop the booster.

The unmanned first successful MR-1A was launched December 19, 1960 using the same Mercury Capsule from the failed MR-1 attempt but this time with a different escape tower. This non-orbital test flight was used to evaluate the Mercury capsule capabilities.

MR-2 was launched on January 31, 1961 with the chimpanzee "Ham" as the test subject. The decision was made during the beginning of the Mercury Project to evaluate the capsule life support systems using an animal test subject in Earth orbit, prior to conducting a manned orbiting space flight. This non-orbital test flight was designed to evaluate the Mercury capsule's life-support, environmental control and recovery systems. Despite some technical problems that developed during the test flight, which resulted properly in the unplanned activation of the capsule's emergency escape system, Ham was successfully recovered.

MA-2 was launched in a non-orbital flight on February 21, 1961 to evaluate the Mercury capsule-to-Atlas rocket structural compatibility and qualify the unmanned Mercury capsule under planned adverse re-entry conditions.

MR-BD (booster development) was launched in a non-orbital flight on March 24, 1961 to evaluate an astronaut simulator package and to qualify system upgrades incorporated following previous Mercury Redstone launches. This final unmanned successful flight resulted in the Mercury Redstone rocket being qualified as man-rated.

MA-3 was launched on April 25, 1961 to place an unmanned Mercury capsule, with an astronaut simulator package, in orbit and return safely to Earth. The global Mercury tracking network capability was also evaluated for system readiness. However, due to the Atlas rocket not acquiring proper trajectory, the range safety officer signaled the rocket to destruct following separation of the Mercury capsule using the retro and escape tower rockets.

MR-3 was the first United States effort to launch a human astronaut into a non-orbital space flight. Commander Alan B. Shepard was launched aboard the capsule *Freedom 7* on May 5, 1961. His Mercury capsule attained a maximum altitude of 115.7 miles and landed 302 miles downrange in a flight lasting 15 minutes, 22 seconds. Main mission objectives included exposing the astronaut to the experiences of space flight including lift-off, sustained powered flight, weightlessness, re-entry and landing. Also evaluated was the astronaut's physiological ability to perform relative functions necessary

during space flight including proper capsule attitude positioning and communication with ground control.

On May 25, 1961 following Shepard's successful space flight, President Kennedy declared before a joint session of Congress the United States' intention to place an American astronaut on the moon prior to the decade's end:

"First, I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the Earth. . . . No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish."

Because of the nature of using a human aboard MR-3, special consideration was given to the utmost safety of the astronaut prior to launch, during flight and subsequent capsule recovery. All conceivable safety systems such as rocket assisted jettison capability, heat shielding, utilization of a landing-impact device and automatic parachute deployment were integrated into the capsule design to allow for full recovery of the contained astronaut following an in-flight emergency and after normal flight. During flight the emergency capsule escape tower rockets, aided by the retro-rocket package, were designed to jettison the capsule clear of the booster in the event of an automatic system detected malfunction or signal activation by the astronaut or ground control. This would subsequently activate a landing parachute system, heat shield release and extension of a pneumatic cushioned landing-impact bag below the capsule. The parachute/impact bag combination was also automatically utilized during normal recovery following a successful flight.

More important to Lionel collectors (and the reason for this article!) is the safety system utilized prior to launch of a manned Mercury Project space capsule. During the countdown of the Mercury-Redstone launch vehicle at T-55 (Launch minus 55 minutes), the main gantry service structure was withdrawn from around the rocket and launch pad. In the event of an emergency abort while the booster and capsule were still in an erect position on the pad, access to and egress of a self-sustained or incapacitated astronaut, prior to repositioning of the main gantry, could be attained utilizing a mobile aerial tower-elevating boom known as the "Cherry Picker". The Cherry Picker mobile tower was originally designed to be used with the manned Mercury-Atlas booster. However, because of operational time study analysis and a desire to develop practical operational experience prior to planned Mercury-Atlas use, the mobile Cherry Picker was utilized by the Mercury-Redstone program for capsule egress following service gantry removal. The Cherry Picker tower cab, capable of reaching a height of 125 feet, was specially designed to be positioned next to the capsule hatch providing the astronaut with a quick

self-egress, up until T-4 minutes. The tower cab could be controlled from a panel at the rear of the mobile transporter, from within the tower cab or by remote control within the launch pad blockhouse. A pre-programmed switch that actuated automatic descent (down and away from the capsule and launch vehicle) could be initiated from the tower cab and blockhouse. During a normal launch sequence, the Cherry Picker tower cab would be signaled to descend to the ground position at T-4 until vehicle launch or emergency use repositioning.

During use of the mobile aerial tower Cherry Picker for the Mercury-Atlas program, testing near the Atlas launching complex gantry service structure indicated that the Cherry Picker could possibly interfere with radio transmissions. Additionally, the Cherry Picker was subject to being damaged from the greater pressure environment produced by the firing Atlas rocket engines. An emergency egress tower platform, extending from the Atlas main service structure, was utilized as the primary egress method for manned Mercury-Atlas launches while the mobile Cherry Picker was stationed behind the blockhouse as a back-up system in the event the primary tower failed to operate. The mobile aerial-tower Cherry Picker would continue to support all remaining manned Project Mercury Redstone and Atlas launches without ever having to be used as an actual emergency escape device.

MR-4 was launched on July 21, 1961 in a non-orbital flight with Captain Virgil I. Grissom aboard the capsule *Liberty Bell 7*. His Mercury capsule attained a maximum altitude of 118 miles and landed 303 miles downrange in a flight lasting 15 minutes, 37 seconds. Main mission objectives were similar to the MR-3 spacecraft control mission with the addition of allowing all three axes of capsule attitude (pitch, yaw & roll) being controlled simultaneously as opposed to independent control. Also evaluated was the newly developed manual activated Rate Stabilization and Control System (RSCS).

MA-4 was launched in an unmanned orbital flight on September 13, 1961. The objectives of the space flight were to place the unmanned Mercury capsule carrying an astronaut simulator in Earth orbit, using an Atlas D rocket, and evaluate the ability for programmed re-entry in a pre-planned designated recovery area. An additional evaluation of the first-time used global Mercury tracking, data gathering and communications network was performed. The Earth orbit was achieved, the capsule was successfully recovered and the Mercury worldwide full tracking network performed exceptionally well.

MA-5 was launched on November 29, 1961 in an orbital flight using the chimpanzee test-subject "Enos" aboard an Atlas

D rocket. The space flight was designed for a three orbit maximum mission but was commanded down after two orbits due to an abnormal capsule roll rate. Enos was successfully recovered following the aborted flight.



Photograph courtesy of NASA

MA-6 was launched on February 20, 1962 that placed the first U. S. American astronaut John H. Glen, Jr. in Earth orbit aboard *Friendship 7* using an Atlas D rocket. Glen's capsule orbited the Earth 3 times and the flight lasted 4 hours, 55 minutes, 23 seconds.

MA-7 was launched May 24, 1962 with astronaut M. Scott Carpenter aboard *Aurora 7* using an Atlas D rocket, which confirmed the success of the MA-6 by duplicating the flight. Carpenter's flight lasted 4 hours, 56 minutes, 5 seconds.

MA-8 was launched on October 3, 1962 with astronaut Walter Schirra aboard the capsule *Sigma 7*

using an Atlas D rocket, which flew on a six-orbit flight lasting 9 hours, 13 minutes, 11 seconds.

The final Mercury flight, MA-9, was launched on May 15, 1963 with astronaut Gordon L. Cooper aboard the capsule *Faith 7* using an Atlas D rocket, which flew on a 22-orbit mission lasting 34 hours, 19 minutes, 49 seconds which resulted in the first American astronaut to spend a day in space. This completed the Mercury Project series of spacecraft. Advances in U.S. spacecraft design and development would continue to evolve using the Gemini and Apollo programs paving the way for eventual landing of a U.S. astronaut on the moon by the decades end.

By 1964 Lionel too would soon seek out new frontiers in toy production while being caught up in the space craze sweeping the country with the highly secret "Project X" *Helios 21*. Truly an advanced toy, even by today's standards, the *Helios 21* would become a "Sears exclusive" in their annual 1964 Christmas catalog. Even though Lionel continued to demonstrate their ability to produce toys "As timely as tomorrow", the *Helios 21*, along with the complete line of toy trains, would succumb to the dreaded world of toy obscurity by the decades end as America now had a taste of the jet-age and vigorously pursued a desire to go faster, higher and further than could be attained within the confines of railroad track.

The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of Robert Jaques of the Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) History Office and Kaylene Hughes of the Redstone Arsenal Department of the Army History in helping to clarify some of the information included in this article. 🚂

Lionel News & Views

by Bill Schmeelk

RM 6643

The Heliport Returns

Lionel's original No. 419 Heliport first appeared in the 1962 catalog. The Heliport was an example of the downturn that things were taking at Lionel. The tooling for the Heliport originated with the 1956 introduction of the No. 465 Sound Dispatching Station.

The elevated station featured a colorful insert in the window section that showed the dispatchers at work amongst a bank of control panels. The station was also illuminated and featured a microphone and a public address system allowing you to announce through the speaker, the arrival and departure of your trains. In a previous News and Views column we discussed the original postwar accessory and the new

version put out last year. As you may remember, the new version compared quite favorably with the original and we were pleased with the more modern PA system that actually allowed you to record and play back your message through a much more technically advanced speaker system.

The original No. 465 Sound Dispatching Station came out the same year that Lionel introduced the No. 110 Elevated Trestle sets and the roof height of the station was about the same height so that the roof of the station could be used as an unloading platform for a train elevated by the highest trestle piers. I can only guess as to whether that was co-incidental or by design. After all, there was no means for passengers on the roof to get into the station. It's interesting to note that the two years that the No. 465 Sound Dispatching Station was available, it only appeared at the end of the catalog in the accessory section. It did not appear, as most accessories did, in the catalog as part of the scenery along with the train sets.

By 1958, the No. 465 Sound Dispatching Station was no longer in the catalog. The No. 365 Dispatching Station replaced it. This was a cheapened version that was still illuminated, but lacked the sound system and microphone of the original. This

version appeared once more and for the last time in the 1959 catalog.

The station returned in 1962 as the No. 419 Lionel Heliport and featured the helicopter launching mechanism from Lionel's popular car, installed on its roof. The Heliport was included in a 1962 television commercial featuring the No. 3413 Mercury Capsule Launching Car and the No. 6512 Cherry Picker Car. As the Atlas rocket is being readied for launch the announcer states, *This is a tense moment at the launching base.* As the countdown proceeds on the No. 413 Countdown Control Panel, the Heliport is shown as the announcers says, *Nearby at the new Lionel Heliport, a Navy copter takes off to make*

the recovery. The copter takes off and flies straight up. The Heliport is on screen for about 4 seconds. As the commercial comes to a close, the announcer states a variation of a theme that concluded several Lionel commercials of the day, *Remember boy, you're the boss on land, in the air, and under the sea when you own Lionel Trains.*

One small change was made by Lionel to make the Heliport look a little different. The

two small ornamental loudspeakers, which had always been mounted on the underside of the roof, were mounted on the rooftop in the Heliport. This is how the Heliport was shown in the catalog and the instruction sheet. Actually, you can mount them either way, but on the Heliport Lionel suggested mounting them on top. The Heliport in the TV commercial however, had them mounted on the underside of the roof.

The Heliport Lionel produced in 1962 was perhaps a sign of the bad times ahead. It was clearly produced as cheaply as possible. They already had the molds for the station, but this version was cheapened considerably from the two previous versions. The colorful insert that added to the attractiveness of the previous versions was simply eliminated. There was nothing to see inside through the window, except of course the metal launching mechanism. The illumination was also eliminated. To launch the helicopter, a wire was fastened to the release mechanism and went through a hole in the underside of the elevated station and joined to make a ring. You could put a finger into this ring and pull it down to send the copter off. The instructions suggested that the copter could be launched by remote control. The instructions went on to state:



This is easily accomplished by tying a string to the Trigger Ring and passing the string through the hole in the base. Install screw eyes to guide the string to any convenient control point.

This was surely Lionel's poorest attempt at remote control. The demonstration in the commercial clearly used this method. Looking at it carefully you can see the ring being pulled down. The catalog price for the Heliport was \$9.95. It was only cataloged in 1962 and is considered relatively rare. The commercial showed the copter as the standard gray Navy copter, but this is not what was shown in the catalog or what was supplied. The copter was also cheapened. This copter was molded in yellow and the tail rotor section, which had been a separate piece in earlier copters, was now molded as part of the main body section. This part of the copter is very fragile and I can't imagine any that were actually played with, surviving a number of returns to earth without damage. I have seen many of these copters with the tail section broken and sometimes broken completely away. This copter body was molded in yellow plastic. There was no Navy designation, but there was a door opening on the side. Sadly, 1962 seems to be the last year that Lionel introduced new trains that required new tooling. From here until the end of the post war era in 1969, Lionel continued on a downward ramp and new tooling became a thing of the past.

In 1963 Lionel produced the last variation using this tooling. The No. 5160 Officials Viewing Stand was offered as an accessory to Lionel's ill-fated road racing sets. This version had two flags on the rooftop, but was without the insert, illumination, or frankly much of anything. The ornamental loudspeakers were mounted on the rooftop. The station had become merely a static decoration. Not surprisingly, this was only cataloged for one year. The value of the Heliport and the Viewing Stand come only from the fact that they were not popular at the time they were made and are therefore relatively rare.

Just this year, Lionel has reissued the Heliport and **photo 1** shows the result. Thankfully, this new version gives no indication of a downward ramp for Lionel. As Lionel did when they re-introduced the Sound Dispatching Station, they have made significant improvements in this new Heliport. The colored insert which adds so much to the look of this station has been included. This new version is also illuminated.

Most significant is the improvement in the remote control launching capability of this new model. No thread is needed. An electro-magnetic plunger has been employed to push the release on the copter launching mechanism. **Photo 2** shows the interior of the new Heliport. The original Heliport is one of the few postwar accessories that I do not have and therefore could not photograph an original.

Photo 3 shows the electrical connections for transformer hook-up. The original of course had no electrical hook-up.

There is only one small area in which the new version falls short of the original. Although the copter supplied does have the separate tail rotor assembly, there are absolutely no markings on the copter. The door openings are there. No door is painted. **Photo 4** shows the new Heliport copter. I compared this copter to the one supplied on the 3419 Helicopter car which was included as part of this year's Missile Launching set. The copter from that car is shown in **photo 5**. The variations between this and Lionel's original are slight. It is interesting to note however that this copter differs significantly from the yellow copter supplied with the Heliport. In fact they were not made from the same molds. Although hard to see in the photos, when placed next to each other you can see differences in both the clear bubble and the body of the two copters. For example, notice the point at which the clear bubble and the body join. Compare the two photos and you will see a noticeable difference. **Photos 6 and 7** show the underside of



each of the copters. The gray copter has the square rotor shank, as did the postwar version. The yellow copter however has a round shank and is smaller in diameter. **Photos 8 and 9** show a top view of each copter. Here again there is a difference. On the yellow copter, the hole in the main rotor does not come through the top, but does on the gray copter.

The new Heliport looks many times better than the original. I tried operating it however and could not get the copter to take off. The rotor spun, but the copter merely toppled off the roof. Thinking that perhaps it was the copter I tried the gray one, but with the same results. I then also tried a post war copter, but no difference. I then tried all three copters on the new No. 3419 Helicopter Car and all took off into the air. The gray copters however flew considerably higher than the yellow one. Clearly, the tooling used for the gray copter is the one Lionel should use in the future.

I then disassembled the launch mechanism from both the Heliport and the 3419 car. I measured the wire of each spring and found that the spring in the car was made from a .038 diameter wire, while the spring from the Heliport was made from wire that was only .028 in diameter. The spring in the car was therefore stronger. I next put the stronger spring into the Heliport. The copters flew a little better, but never more than 18 inches above the heliport. The car would send the gray copter from the table height that the car was on, to the ceiling.



I also noted that the tail support on the car was different than the one on the Heliport. The one on the car was taller and had a deeper slot allowing it to do a better job of holding the copter straight on the launching spool. The small diameter of the rotor shank on the yellow copter, and the shorter tail support allowed it to tip considerably on the launching spool. But even when I was careful to see that it was straight, the results were no better.

The new Lionel Heliport seemed to have all the makings of a desirable reissue from the postwar days. The electrical remote control release, the colored insert, and the illumination are all significant improvements over the original. The improvements that Lionel made were all welcome ones. I'm just very confused by the differences between its launch mechanism and copter as compared with Lionel's new No. 3419 Helicopter Launching Car. The copter and launching mechanism of the new No. 3419 is almost identical to Lionel's original and operates so much better than the unit mounted into the Heliport. Perhaps mine was unique? I'd be interested to hear from others who have attempted to operate this accessory. Let's hear from you. 🚁

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Photographs by Bill Schmeelk

What's In It For Me?

by Bob Carter

RM 6620

What's in it for me? Why should I help? It looks like they have plenty of people to handle that. Oh, let's let someone else do it.

How many times have you said, thought or heard someone say those words? Most of the time, I guess, I was one of those folks. Have you ever found yourself just waiting for the busses, waiting for some one to help sell you a T-shirt or some other LCCA "just gotta have" collectible, or waiting to register? You know the feeling, a lot of waiting. Why? The reason for the waiting is that there just weren't enough helpers. Well to borrow a phrase from Paul Harvey, here is the rest of the story.

The year was 2000 and the LCCA convention was being held in Dearborn, Michigan. My wife Dinah and I had ridden Amtrak from Dallas to Chicago and on to Dearborn, arriving a little earlier than we had expected. We walked around the Hyatt and spotted a group of people stuffing these orange and blue plastic bags. Not having anything else to do, we walked up and asked if they needed any help. Dienzel and Joy Dennis, Barry and Betty Findley, and others all jumped up and showed us what to do. We talked and stuffed and talked some more and had a grand time. This was the second LCCA convention I had ever attended, so the opportunity to meet and visit with some fellow members and their wives provided us the chance to get to know a few more people. I had no idea they were club officers. I thought our officers were like the management

where I worked. You know the type, always in meetings or telling you what to do and then going off to have a cup of coffee or otherwise trying to look busy. Not these guys and their wives. When we finished, I had a new appreciation for the management of our club. They're volunteers, just like we are. They like trains, just like we do. They happen to be elected to office, but for no pay, and they don't have any interns.

What's developed has been a fun time that Dinah and I look forward to at each convention. We've been able to assist at the sales table, registration desk and passing out table and raffle prizes. What do we like best about it? It's getting to meet the fellow members and having a brief one-on-one, even though it may be hectic.

What's in it for me? It's the knowledge that I'm helping, you the member, and the club, at a time when help is needed. There is a book by Robert Fulghum titled: *All I Really Need To Know, I Learned In Kindergarten*. One of his truisms is: When you go out into the world...hold hands and stick together. I think that is still true, no matter how old you are. We have enjoyed "holding hands and sticking together." Why don't you give it a try?

So, what's in it for you? A good time, a chance to meet new friends and visit with old ones, a feeling of accomplishment and of helping out when and where needed. This next year in Las Vegas, or at any future convention, stop by and ask Eric Fogg, John Fisher or any of the officers how you can help. You'll still be able to take tours, sleep late, go to the seminars and do whatever you want to do, because this is not a full time job. In fact, you may like it so much and get to know so many people; you might end up running for office yourself. If you do, remember to ask yourself, "What's in it for me?" I think you already know the answer. 🚂

**There's a LCCA membership form located
on the inside back page of the ghost cover.**

**Help support your club and pass it on
to a fellow Lionel collector.**

You'll make a friend for life.

A Lionel Puzzlement

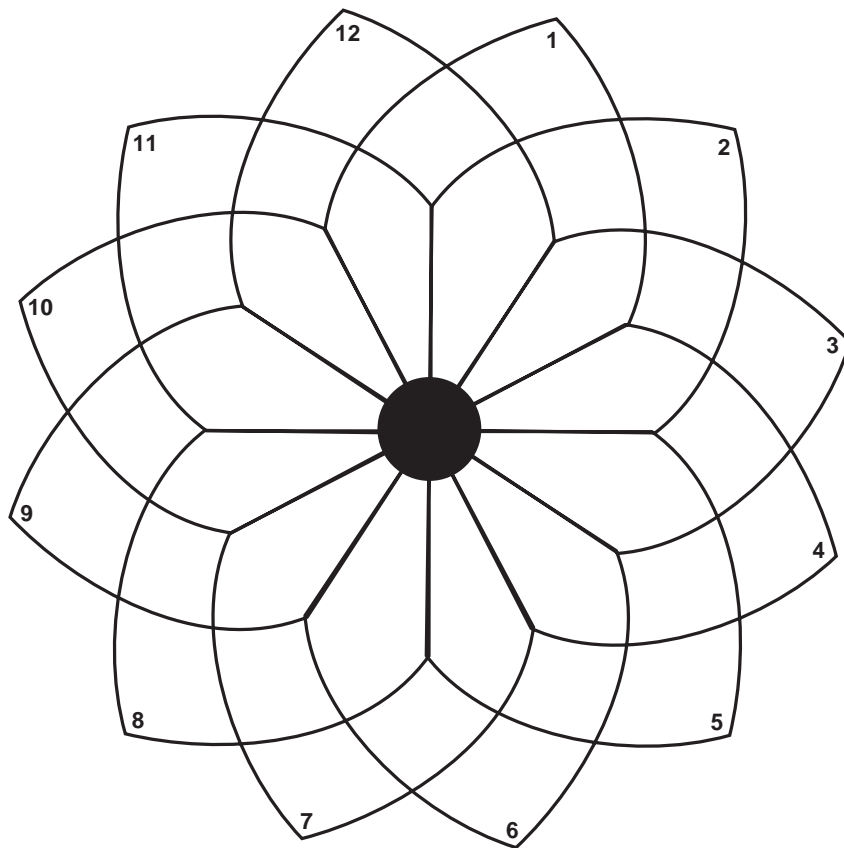
by Gene H. Russell, Ed.D.

RM 24608

The completed flower design of this puzzle contains 24 three-letter words. From the provided clues, enter the words from the tips of the petals, in toward the center of the blossom, just one letter per box. Note that half of the words curve clockwise while the other half will arc counterclockwise. Use both sets of clues to achieve a full blossom. And remember, this bud's for you. 🚂

Answers to last month's puzzle

1. Fiber
2. Reefer
3. Radar
4. Rocket
5. Tower
6. Red
7. Dispatch
8. Highway
9. Yard
10. Dwarf



Clockwise Clues

1. Often pictured on catalog covers.
2. Location where early brakemen rode on boxcars.
3. Flatcar with _____ boat.
4. Color of block signal light.
5. Pick-_____ vat car.
6. Poultry dispatch car occupant.
7. Buddy of "Happy" and "Lenny."
8. A railroad miniature "intended primarily for children."
9. Converts logs to lumber.
10. Trolley or interur-_____.
11. Dump car load.
12. West Coast city name on early classic cardstock boxes; 1st of two-words.

Counterclockwise Clues

1. Artificial coal container.
2. GE 44-_____ switcher.
3. Emotion evoked when getting a Lionel item.
4. Lionel dealer or _____.
5. Collection of locomotive and cars forming a unit.
6. Parents hope that secretly concealed presents are well "_____."
7. _____ got the Lady Lionel.
8. Number of wheels on one side of the GG-1 locomotive.
9. Upper Midwestern RR noted for hauling grain, 1883-1990.
10. Caboose window.
11. Bobbing sheriff and out-_____.
12. Lawrence's relationship to Joshua.

Answers will be published in the next issue

Treasurer's Report

by **Richard H. Johnson**

RM 7103

As I complete my first year as your Treasurer, I am happy to report that your club is in sound financial condition. Despite all that has occurred in our economy since September 11, 2001, LCCA is as strong as ever. As we ended 2001, we had over \$500,000 in membership equity. This ample cash reserves enables us to promptly pay all of our bills upon receipt, pay for any unforeseen or unbudgeted expenses should they arise, and keep your club on the cutting edge of technology so you can receive the utmost in membership benefits. Each year, we have our financial records reviewed by a paid, non-member CPA to ensure that we remain fiscally responsible. As in the past, we have passed with flying colors. A synopsis of his report appears below. Unlike other train clubs, we have never, and we will never, budget for a loss. Your officers and directors have made every effort to ensure that you, our members, are receiving added value for your dues, commemorative purchases and convention registration fees.


What a fantastic convention car we produced for this year! We received orders for 2,500 of the "Coal Goes to War" PRR hoppers which are being produced in two different car numbers. They should be in your hands by the end of October. We continue to receive six annual colorful, informative and interesting issues of *The Lion Roars* because of the efforts of Bill Schmeelk and his cadre of contributing editors, and six annual issues of the premier buy, sell and trade publication,

**Lionel Collectors Club of America
Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Membership Equity-
Modified Cash Basis
Year Ended December 31, 2001**

| | |
|---|----------------|
| <u>ASSETS:</u> | <u>2001</u> |
| Current Assets: | |
| Cash in banks | 363,963 |
| Marketable investments | 195,000 |
| Inventory at cost | <u>98,452</u> |
| Total current assets | 657,415 |
| Fixed Assets: | |
| Equipment, net of depreciation | 9,364 |
| Other Assets: | |
| Convention deposits | <u>4,056</u> |
| Total Assets | 670,835 |
| <u>LIABILITIES & MEMBERSHIP EQUITY:</u> | |
| Current Liabilities: | |
| Accounts payable | 0 |
| Convention car deposits | 60,127 |
| Michigan sales tax payable | <u>372</u> |
| Total current liabilities | 60,499 |
| Membership Equity: | <u>610,336</u> |
| Total Liabilities & Membership Equity | 670,835 |

The Interchange Track, under the capable leadership of Bill Button and his editorial staff.

Those of you who attended this year's convention in Pittsburgh know what a fantastic convention it was thanks to the efforts of Lou Caponi and all of his volunteers. The Lionel Trains on-site gondola given to the first 400 registrants was a real hit. However, two other Convention "surprises" were a bigger hit: the Carnegie "Requin" sub on a LCCA "U.S. Navy" flatcar given to those members who attended LCCA Day at Carnegie Science Center on Thursday; and the "Dick Maddox" boxcar available to the first 250 members wishing to purchase this car. Talk about bang for your buck!

Take a moment to thank your club officials for all their efforts on your behalf. I am proud to be a member of this leadership team, and I look forward to serving you during the coming year. 

Dick Johnson - Treasurer

**Lionel Collectors Club of America
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and
Change in Membership Equity
Modified Cash Basis
Year Ended December 31, 2001**

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| <u>REVENUE:</u> | <u>2,001</u> |
| Car sales | 131,851 |
| Dues | 279,931 |
| Convention | 99,605 |
| Interest & dividends | 25,857 |
| Initiation & reinstatement fees | 2,658 |
| Meets | 3,222 |
| Gain (loss) on sale of assets | 0 |
| Freight income | 17,459 |
| Other | <u>552</u> |
| Total Revenue | 561,135 |
| <u>EXPENSES:</u> | |
| Car sales | 71,293 |
| Lion Roars | 138,151 |
| Interchange Track | 117,128 |
| Roster | 0 |
| Professional fees | 39,144 |
| Officers & Board of Directors | 45,841 |
| Convention Expenses | 116,068 |
| Meet expenses | 1,838 |
| Federal income tax | 6,969 |
| Insurance | 6,749 |
| Depreciation | 3,550 |
| Bank & credit card charges | 3,368 |
| Membership expense | 6,173 |
| Printing | 321 |
| Website | 28,537 |
| Election expenses | 4,738 |
| Miscellaneous | <u>1,342</u> |
| Total Expenses | 707,296 |
| REVENUE IN EXCESS OF EXPENSES | (30,093) |
| MEMBERSHIP EQUITY AT START OF YEAR | <u>640,429</u> |
| MEMBERSHIP EQUITY AT END OF YEAR | 610,336 |

