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# *The* **Lion Roars**



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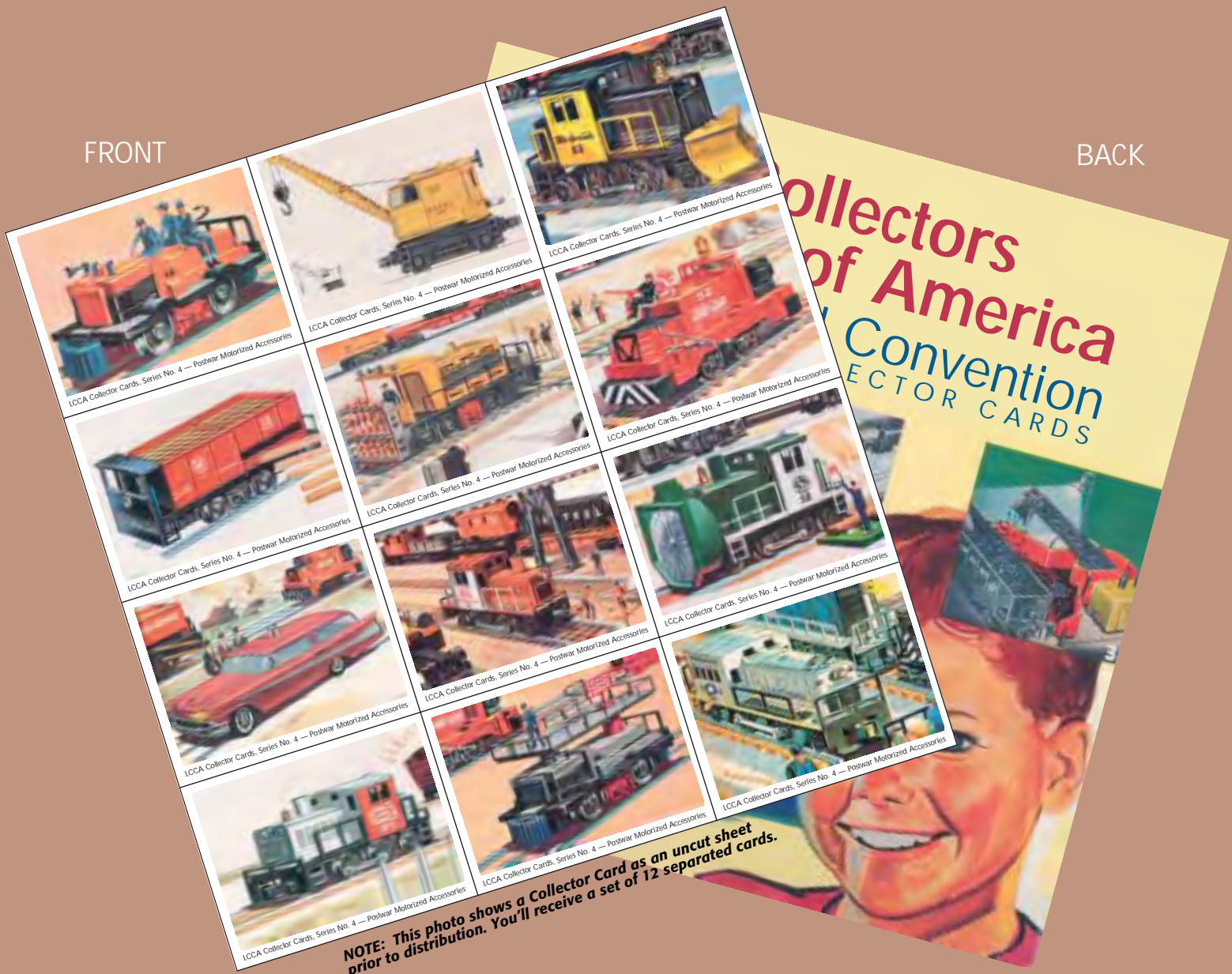




# Convention Collector Cards Series No. 4

FRONT

BACK



If you were unable to attend our recent Convention, here's an opportunity for you to obtain a set of the popular LCCA Convention Collector Cards, Series 4. This all-new collectible series was distributed during our Get Acquainted Party in St. Louis and was an immediate hit.

This fourth series celebrates Lionel's postwar motorized units with artwork from pages of their catalogs from that period. Turn all the cards over and re-assemble them to form a print of one of Lionel's vintage catalog ads.

A limited number of sets are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The cards will not be

reprinted, so this may be your only purchase opportunity.

Limit: one set per member. To order, send your check or money made order payable to "LCCA" for \$15, which includes shipping and handling, to:

LCCA Business Office  
Convention Collector Cards, Series 4  
P.O. Box 479, LaSalle, IL 61301-0479

LCCA will send you all 12 pre-cut cards. Orders arriving after all cards have been sold will be returned with your check or money order.

*Don't put this off – these will go quickly.*

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ON THE FRONT COVER

Challenger 3985, the pride of Union Pacific's Heritage Fleet, will be on point for The LCCA Special in July, 2006.

Photograph by Michael Dupslaff

Contacting the LCCA Business Office

Members can contact the Business Office through the club's website at [www.lionelcollectors.org](http://www.lionelcollectors.org), by e-mail at [lcca@cpointcc.com](mailto:lcca@cpointcc.com), by fax at 815-223-0791, or by mail at: LCCA Business Office, P.O. Box 479, LaSalle, IL 61301-0479.

They will provide or process **changes of address, changes of phone number**, "make good" copies of *The Lion Roars*, applications for membership, replacement membership cards, reinstatements, death notices, commemorative orders, Convention registration, and club mementos.

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LCCA Web Site: [www.lionelcollectors.org](http://www.lionelcollectors.org)

People to Contact:

*President* - Always available and as a last resort  
*President Elect* - Schedule a train meet  
*Immediate Past President* - Complaint against another member  
*Secretary* - Any administrative action not handled by LCCA Business Office  
*Treasurer* - Club finances only

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# The President's Report

by Louis J. Caponi  
RM 8735

I want to start off by saying "Thank you" for giving me the opportunity to serve as president of the finest train collecting club in America. It truly is an honor. Wow, it's hard to believe that it seems like I joined the club only yesterday. Time sure flies when you're having fun!

Yes, this is a fun club. If you've attended one of our annual Conventions, you know what I mean. For those who haven't, a vintage TV commercial said it best: "Try it, you'll like it."

Our fabulous Convention team presented one of the best Conventions yet. As the host of two previous LCCA Conventions held in the Keystone state, I graciously accept being "one-upped" by the St. Louis event. My hat is off to this year's team. Judging by the many e-mails and letters I've received about it, I'm pleased that we had a group of "happy campers."

## "All Aboard!" for Denver

While I prepared this report, I received a phone call from LCCA Director and Convention Manager John Fisher. He said he had great news for me to share with our members through my report. Riding on a Colorado train excursion is a hobby enthusiast's dream come true, and LCCA can now be considered a big-time dream-maker.

We will start the 2006 Convention week on **Monday Morning July 23** (a day earlier than our past practice) and board a famous Union Pacific "pony" from their Heritage Fleet. About 18 vintage coaches, vista domes, and lounge cars — all fully restored and ready — will whisk us into the High Plains region, leaving Denver's Union Station northbound for Cheyenne, Wyoming. These elegant yellow cars will be coupled to locomotives of the Union Pacific Heritage Fleet, which includes the Challenger #3985 and Northern #844.



This day-long excursion aboard "The LCCA Special" will include a fun-filled day at the UP depot and roundhouse in Cheyenne. For more information, read the article by Jerry Calkins (RM 9418) at the center spread of this issue.

## More Rides, More Fun

Later in Convention week, we will board the Georgetown Loop Railroad. We'll also ride the Royal Gorge Route on the D&RGW tracks at the bottom of the canyon and alongside the Arkansas River that carved this gorge eons ago. We'll also see the incredible layouts of Terry Johnson.

You say you want more? Then climb aboard the famous Cog Railway at Manitou Springs (near Colorado Springs) and ride to the summit of Pike's Peak. While up there (14,110 feet), check out the fresh donuts at the snack bar. These donuts are grotesquely "deformed" because of cooking at that high altitude, but they are delicious anyway. And yes, there will be time to discover and explore the host city of Denver. Are we having fun yet?

The headquarters for the Convention will be the beautiful Marriott Tech Center Hotel. Plan to spend the entire week in the Mile High City and its environs for the Convention of a lifetime. I hope you're as excited as I am.

Watch for the Hotel Reservation and Convention Registration forms to be published in the December 2005 issue of *The Lion Roars* and at the club's Web site. Sign up early, and don't get left out!

## 2005 Convention Car

The 2005 Convention Car was announced much later in the year than usual because unforeseen and unforeseeable problems kept popping up. We don't see this happening at all in 2006. If you attended the St. Louis Convention, you had an opportunity to see the Lionel® pre-production samples. We expect delivery of this three-piece car in late December 2005.

## "Halloween" General Set Final Two Add-ons

Be on the lookout for news about the final two add-on cars for the "Halloween" General train set. Lionel is currently producing the pre-production samples of these two cars for our review and approval. An announcement will be made in the very near future. This two-car set will complement the Sheriff and Outlaw car, and the new box will have a special design. There will be room in this box for the Sheriff and Outlaw car that you have already purchased. I guarantee you, both of these cars will be unique; they have never been made before!

## One More Thing

Your continuing involvement in and support of this club makes it work so well. Until next time, happy railroading! 🚂

# Meet our New President

by Ed Richter  
RM 13075

He's an omnipresent figure at the host hotel during our annual Conventions, an enthusiastic participant in membership meetings, and earnestly engaged in every club activity.

New LCCA President, Lou Caponi, is the principal conceptor of many of our club products, such as the annual Convention cars, the very successful LCCA "Halloween" General set, and its add-on car. Members still talk about the amazing 1998 Convention in Philly and its memorable all-day (and into the night) Amtrak ride to Horseshoe Curve – a once-in-a-lifetime experience orchestrated by Lou.

His wife, Rose, was another important factor in the success of the Philly Convention. Lou and Rose will celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in September of this year. Their son, Dominic, has attended club Conventions for as long as most of us can remember; we literally watched him grow up. Little Dom is now Big Dom. He has graduated from high school and will enter Fordham University this fall with a prestigious and well-deserved academic scholarship. His parents couldn't be more proud.



Because Lou is an incurable extrovert and an idea guy, most members recognize him at a glance and know of his accomplishments for the club and to the train hobby. However, I want to let you in on something you probably don't know about him.

Many LCCAers share Lou's interest in trains, but he is also active in what is probably the second-most-favorite hobby of many members – cars; as in Muscle Cars, Antique Cars, Collector Cars, Dragsters, and Hot Rods.

It might surprise you to know that Lou has a 1939 Chevy coupe tricked out with a 350 ZZ4 engine that delivers 355 horsepower and tons of torque; see **photo 1**. The citizens of the greater Philadelphia area know this fire-breathing monster well, and when they hear it coming down the street the quick-to-react folks get out of the way. Mothers gather their children close, and Boy Scouts stand ready to escort little old ladies out of the path of this thundering machine.



Since he was a 10-year-old boy, Lou hovered around gas stations and spent the next 20 or so years working in them and in several automobile and drag racing establishments. He moved up to engine shops, high performances shops, and professional drag racing; then to managing many of these businesses.


In the late 1970s he partnered with two friends and built a 1971 Chevelle drag car; see **photo 2**. This rig had a 454 engine that dyno-tested at more than 650 horsepower. The team won several prestigious awards, including national event class awards.

*Car Craft Magazine* took notice of the group in November 1978 and prepared a feature article; see **photo 3**. The team was successful to the point that they could support themselves from their winnings for a number of years – that's like getting paid to play. Their winnings and awards continued to pile up, including the season-long points Money Trail Award, NHRA Best Engineering Award, and Driver of the Year Award.

While Lou and his friends were at the top of their game, the owner of one of the businesses he was working for asked him to sell some toy trains. He attended some meets and soon Lou's interest moved towards trains. We all know how that turned out!



At lower right, Lou attends to one of the tires of #1249.

The next time you are running your trains and the locomotive passes an unused, long, skinny section of the layout; consider modeling a drag strip. Add a control tower, starting light tree, bleachers, fans, and cars – then include a souped-up 1971 white Chevelle with a famous drag racer's name and number on the door: Lou Caponi and 1249. 

Photographs provided by Rose Caponi


# Treasurer's Report

by Richard H. Johnson  
RM 7103

This report marks my fourth and final report as Treasurer of LCCA. It's really hard to believe that four years have passed so quickly. I have enjoyed this position immensely because it has enabled me to learn how LCCA operates so successfully. This education will serve me well as your new President Elect. Thanks for all of your past and present support. I pledge to continue to keep LCCA as the premier Lionel train club.

Last year was a banner year for LCCA. As a result of some very innovative and well received club commemorative issues created by then President Elect Lou Caponi, LCCA finished 2004 with an unrestricted membership equity of \$689,218. This position of liquidity enables the club to continue to take advantage of unusual purchasing opportunities as they arise and gives us a decided advantage in negotiating goods and services for the benefit of our members. What other train club offers commemoratives, conventions, publications and a website as good as ours? None! Please take a moment to review the financial reports approved by our accountant which follow this report. Please contact me if you have any questions, and I'll be happy to answer them for you.

Your leadership team has continued to insist upon "added value" for your membership and purchasing dollars, and we have again succeeded in our quest. We recognize that the continued success of LCCA would not be possible without the hundreds of volunteer hours donated by all of our appointed officials, meet hosts and co-hosts, convention workers, and other helpers. To all of our volunteer members, their spouses and significant others, and their children and other relatives who have donated their services to the club, we offer our sincere thanks for all you do.

Enjoy the coming fall months and holidays with your families and friends, and don't forget that there is "a lifetime of happiness collecting Lionel trains." 

## **Lionel Collectors Club of America Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Membership Equity Modified Cash Basis Year Ended December 31, 2004**

<u>ASSETS:</u>	<u>2004</u>
Current Assets:	
Cash in banks	296,524
Marketable investments	294,000
Inventory at cost	<u>297,391</u>
Total current assets	887,915
Fixed Assets:	
Equipment, net of depreciation	6,918
Other Assets:	
Convention/meet deposits	<u>11,900</u>
Total Assets	906,733

## LIABILITIES & MEMBERSHIP EQUITY:

Current Liabilities:	
Accounts payable	0
Commemorative deposits	217,515
Michigan sales tax payable	<u>0</u>
Total current liabilities	217,515
Membership Equity:	<u>689,218</u>
Total Liabilities & Membership Equity	906,733

## **Lionel Collectors Club of America Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Change in Membership Equity Modified Cash Basis Year Ended December 31, 2004**

<u>REVENUE:</u>	<u>2004</u>
Car sales	317,673
Dues	246,710
Convention	150,424
Interest & dividends	6,723
Initiation & reinstatement fees	420
Meets	8,788
Freight income	0
Other	<u>481</u>
Total Revenue	731,219
<u>EXPENSES:</u>	
Car sales	165,364
Lion Roars	82,666
Interchange Track	96,471
Convention expenses	89,945
Meet expenses	7,061
Website	9,982
Professional fees	39,176
Officers & Board of Directors expenses	52,298
Committee expenses	4,885
Insurance	3,079
Depreciation	2,797
Bank & credit card charges	8,545
Membership expense	3,547
Membership drive expense	10,782
Printing	772
Election expenses	4,619
Federal income tax	0
Miscellaneous expenses	<u>2,222</u>
Total Expenses	584,211
REVENUE IN EXCESS OF EXPENSES	147,008
MEMBERSHIP EQUITY AT START OF YEAR	<u>542,210</u>
MEMBERSHIP EQUITY AT END OF YEAR	689,218

On behalf of club members in states struck by Hurricane Katrina and with concern for those adversely affected by this storm and its aftermath, LCCA has sent a contribution to the humanitarian relief effort.

Members in devastated areas now without postal service may not be able to receive club publications. They should contact the LCCA Business Office by US Mail, e-mail (lcca@cpointcc.com), or fax (815-223-0791) and provide temporary or permanent address information.



# My Pride and Joy

*Editor's Note: Send "My Pride and Joy" pictures to [TLR](#) for publication in this continuing layout photo album series. Your color 4x6-inch prints can be sent to the Editor by USPS or as HI RES (300 dpi) digital images e-mailed to him. Include yourself and/or your family in the photos along with about 100 words of text. Get clicking!*

## John Mateyko RM 23791

The downtown district of John's basement layout shows lots of street-level activity, especially at the Sinclair gas station, but apparently there was a temporary lull in train traffic as this photo was snapped. John has incorporated



family geography and history into the design of his model railroad, and its name reflects places he knows well: Lansing (IL), his current home; Calumet City, where he went to grade school and high school; and Atchison, because Santa Fe locomotives dominate his layout – thus, the L,CC & A Railroad, which has a familiar ring to it.

## Jim Richardson RM 27017

Jim's oldest grandson Carson operates the gantry crane with younger brother Bryce looking on and hoping, "My turn next!" This around-the-wall, U-shaped home

layout shows Jim's craftsmanship as a scene maker. Many vignettes connect the layout to his family through signs on shops and with buildings named for family members. Note the clever use of wallpaper border to suggest a backdrop landscape. A full article about this model railroad is pending publication in *TLR*.

## Lionel Railroad Club of Milwaukee

Lionel-oriented train clubs are also welcome as contributors to this album. An exact scale model of the



famous Hellgate Bridge is a revealing clue to the identity of this layout, although this club is nowhere near the site of the span. The model bridge is suspended on piers, and its deck is about 10 feet above the floor. Now under construction by members of the LRCM, this layout includes Standard Gauge and O-gauge trains. Some of the motive power and rolling stock are of The Milwaukee Road as a tribute to their hometown railroad. 🚂



# Murder on the Crescent

## Part I: The Amtrak Dinner Companion

by Grazyna J. Kozaczka  
RM 19361

*Editor's Note: In the spirit of the "trick or treat" holiday later this month, here's a Halloween extra "treat" with a "trick" ending. This train-related short fiction story takes place on board an Amtrak Superliner.*

The slim, silver body of the train sliced through the long shadows cast by the setting sun as it sped south through the industrial waste of the Eastern megalopolis. Even the monumental architecture of Philadelphia and Washington could not erase the ugliness that coexisted,

dance of a thousand black ringlets of her hair, shaking and bouncing as she sauntered through the aisle.

His unshaven face was half-hidden in the shadow of a slightly curled peach-pink baseball cap – the visor pulled low on his forehead. He was a perfect complement to the grim surroundings outside and the lackluster ambiance inside. "What else could you expect on board Amtrak's Crescent Superliner?" I thought, nearly saying it aloud. I was leaving my beloved Manhattan and tracking south to Atlanta, Georgia.

When I scooted onto the brown vinyl seat across from the old guy, he looked up briefly. His expression did not welcome, but his gaze judged. My greeting prompted a minimal acknowledgement, "You are from the North." It was not a question; rather, a pronouncement that did not embrace me as a traveling compatriot and firmly drew a line between us.



albeit in the shadows, alongside their grandeur. Who could find beauty among the refuse of civilization: scrap metal dumps, long-vacant industrial buildings with black orifices instead of windows, and rusting high-voltage towers? I couldn't. A huge but faded billboard projected the handsome face of James Bond presenting Finlandia Vodka – shaken not stirred – as if it mattered.

My mood didn't improve when I entered the brightly lit but sparsely populated dining car. The somber atmosphere reflected the grimy landscape outside; even the yellow carnations looked uncomfortable in tiny white vases on the tables. I followed a young hostess to a table already occupied by an elderly man. From behind her, I watched a

"Great," I wondered, "Does he know that the Civil War ended a very long time ago?" It seemed that neither he nor any of his kinfolk ever signed a treaty with the Federals. Had I morphed from a transplanted Pole to a despised Yankee? Should I be concerned about heading south and into hostile territory? Avoiding a verbal confrontation as real – and as futile – as Pickett's Charge to Little Round Top, I offered a glib "And you must be from the South. How interesting."

Apparently my slightly ironic tone sparked a challenge and provided an opportunity for him to flaunt his southern prowess. No matter what happened 137 years ago, he was not a loser. He wanted to make sure that I knew it.



“All my life I lived in Rivington, South Carolina, but not for much longer. I’m tired of the cold weather. In a week, I’ll sign a deal for a house in Celebration, Florida. Buying it for cash money. I’ve made more than I’ll ever need. Do you know about Celebration?” he asked in a mostly friendly manner.

I thought I should not encourage him, but the temptation overwhelmed me. I made a comment about the “fake-Disney town.” That was all he needed to launch a fierce defense of this model community, the southern way of life, and his own lifestyle. He catalogued his numerous financial successes and glided effortlessly from topic to topic. I soon felt like I was drowning in his stream of consciousness.



The dreary dining car now provided me with some much-needed distractions. First was little Demetrius, a bored five-year-old traveling with a short-tempered grandmamma. When the youngster slipped under the table, the frazzle lady marched Demetrius back to a sleeper compartment. My entertainment had been cancelled.

Fortunately, another tragi-comic interlude began when an extremely heavy woman tried to squeeze her way onto the bench seat of the adjacent table. The airlines have no selling point over Amtrak in attempts to fit more passengers into ever-smaller spaces. This Amtrak dining car, apparently designed to accommodate either children or anorexics but not full-figured adults, could be a learning laboratory for greedy air carriers. The hapless woman began the struggle for a seat against all odds, but she was persistent. She gave up only after she dragged to the floor all the table settings, the white linen tablecloth, a set of linen napkins, and a tiny vase with a carnation.

Despite her contortions, the old man kept talking about Celebration, his estranged wife, his two sons, his tax

business, his day trading, his CPA course in New York City, his three Mercedes convertibles and the greatest mistake of his life.

“You would never believe the stupid thing I did about 25 years ago,” he announced with a supportive flamboyant gesture. Now he had my full attention, what a refreshing departure from his constant barrage of self-centered resume-building.

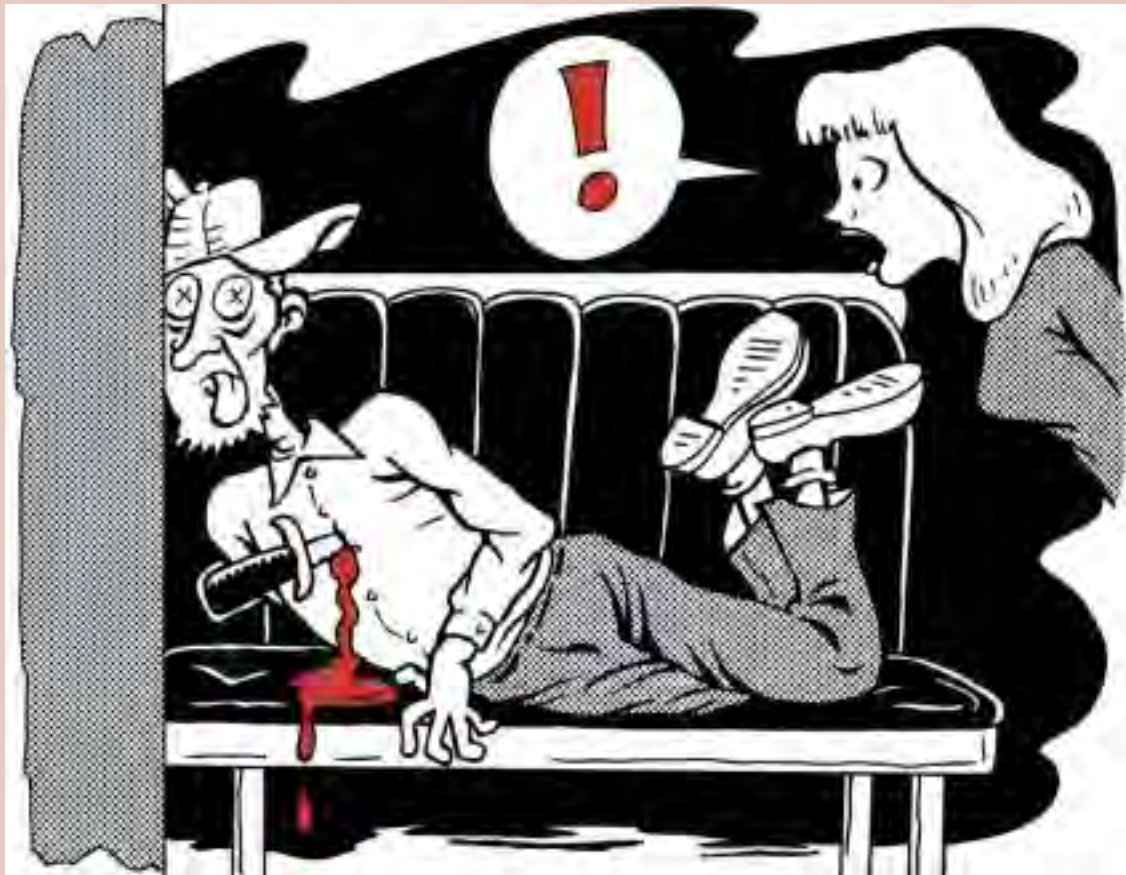
“What did you do?” I interjected although he did not expect or wait for any prompting from me.

“Since I was a kid, I collected Lionel model trains and had quite a layout. I figured the future of train hobby collecting was not in O gauge but in HO. I reckoned the smaller trains would be a good investment, so I sold some of my stuff and swapped other pieces for HO gauge. Was I stupid! When I heard that one of the engines I practically gave away brought five grand at a recent auction, it almost made me sick.”

I thought but did not speak the words, “There is justice in the world after all. Those who can’t find pleasure in collecting – only in dollar signs related to lovely objects – deserve an awakening.”

I escaped from the dining car as soon as I finished the highly touted Amtrak signature dessert, a chocolate mousse pyramid. When I returned to my private, first-class sleeping compartment, our car attendant, Steve – quite dashing in a crisp blue shirt – had already

made up the lower bunk bed. I settled in bed to watch *The Divine Secrets of the Ya, Ya Sisterhood* offered on Amtrak Channel 5 and displayed on the miniscule television set mounted on the wall in the corner of the compartment. The monotonous movements and hypnotic sounds of the speeding train lulled me toward sleep, but I awakened from dreamy pre-sleep by a noise in the hallway. I couldn’t quite figure out what I heard, so I pushed up the shade of a small window on the hallway side of the compartment. In the diffused soft light, I could only see the door across the narrow aisle. So I draped a coat over my fleecy sweat suit and slid my compartment door open as softly as possible. To the right, an angular corner blocked my view, but the commotion was in the opposite direction and two doors from me. Steve, now looking a little disheveled, and a tall man in a full Amtrak uniform stood facing an open compartment door and talking in a subdued but agitated tone of voice. They were so involved in their conversation that they didn’t notice me peering out of my door. I heard snippets of their conversation; enough to realize the situation was serious.



Of course, I had to know what was going on in compartment 6, yet I realized that the two men would not welcome an intrusion. If I rushed at them as fast as the motion of the train allowed, maybe I could get a look into number 6 before they intercepted and stopped me. My plan worked. I was upon the two men before they realized what was happening.

I didn't know what to expect there, but certainly not the sight that met my eyes. In the seat but slumped against the window was my dinner companion with his pink hat slightly askew. A black handle of what must have been a knife protruded from his chest. The front of his dark-blue denim shirt was blackened by a blood stain, some of which drained into the pattern of the blue and purple upholstery. I only had a few seconds to take in the tragic picture because both men turned to me and blocked my view into the compartment.

"What are you doing here, ma'am? Please return immediately into your compartment," the tall man curtly ordered, not even pretending to be polite. I stepped back and sought the support of the wall. I felt tears coming.

"Why did you leave your compartment?" Steve asked as he firmly grabbed my elbow and escorted me back into my compartment. By now, several other passengers stood at their doors. All wanted to know what had happened.

The uniformed man took charge of the situation and announced gravely, "There has been an accident in compartment six. There is no cause for alarm." He continued, "Our next stop is Greensboro in half an hour. Everything will be cleared up then, so please go back to

your compartments. Your car attendant will serve complementary drinks and snacks."

This man was definitely in charge. I presumed he was the Chief Conductor of the Crescent. I remembered that I saw him in the dim lights of the platform as I boarded the train at Penn Station.

The other passengers went back to their compartments — an easy move for them, since they

didn't see a knife handle sticking out of the man's chest. I knew this was not an accident. This was murder. And there was a good chance that the murderer was still on board.

After Steve practically shoved me into my compartment, I stepped up on the closed lid of the toilet and peered onto the upper berth; no murderer hiding there! After taking this precaution, I locked my door, mourned my unpleasant dinner companion, and began to think.



"This might be the opportunity of a lifetime — to solve the sordid murder of my dinner companion," I mused. I pulled down the folding sink, washed my face, and gulped down three miniature cups of ice water from a separate faucet attached to the sink. An intuitive spark illuminated my mind, and I could see clearly now.

*Continued on page 34*



# The View from the Top of the Arch

by Bob Carter  
RM 6620

St. Louis opened its arms to us, and we embraced the city that welcomed us. The week began with an adroit re-scheduling maneuver. Because of track repairs on the main line, Amtrak could not provide a train for our pre-planned excursion to Jefferson City, Missouri. Instead, Amtrak substituted a trip to Springfield, Illinois, and we enjoyed the Land of Lincoln on Tuesday. It was an enjoyable train trip with lunch.



While we rode the rails, selected youngsters in the gateway city enjoyed a rail journey of a different kind. LCCA arranged a visit to St. Louis Children's Hospital for a hands-on operating session with Lionel® trains on

Fastrack™ for kids/patients at this large, specialized hospital. The Child Life department of the facility offered a warm welcome to a select crew of LCCAers who became "day brighteners" to a group of kids/patients. The youngsters managed smiles despite the influence of



medications and their struggle with an illness. LCCA contributed a Lionel freight train set to the hospital for use by kids/patients in the hospital's playroom. Local news media covered this session.

That evening, we visited the Big Bend Model Railroad Club in nearby Webster Groves, Missouri. This operating layout has been operating continually since 1938. The layout was housed in a former train depot, and BNSF tracks now run past it. The building remains electrified as it was when the depot was built. Although the club had made a few modifications, an electrical upgrade and AC were not among them. The two-rail, O-scale layout filled the former waiting rooms. The BBMRC members were very cordial to us three-railers, and they enjoyed showing off their trains as much as we enjoyed watching the show. There's something about train folks in this hobby that spells F-R-I-E-N-D-L-Y despite different preferences for three or two rails.







After the trains, we went to the home of the “world famous” Ted Drewe’s frozen custard. We pondered the choices: vanilla, chocolate or strawberry “Concrete.” From personal experience, I can report that the chocolate was excellent. We didn’t get it served upside-down like their ads say because our guides thought the frozen treat would not be that firm on a 100-degree day.



After the delightful time at the WF&P, our guides subdivided the group and each visited several home layouts and the large St. Louis Lionel Railroad Club O-gauge layout. The home layouts varied in size and scope, but the one constant was the warmth of the individuals who opened their homes and shared their trains with us. Hundreds of visitors roamed through homesteads that afternoon. We enjoyed a basement layout, a garage layout, and a



On Wednesday, sleek motor coaches carried us to the Wabash, Frisco & Pacific steam powered railroad for rides on its 12-inch gauge, two-mile-long main line through the woods and along the Merrimac River. All enjoyed this picturesque, peaceful trip into the countryside near Glencoe, Missouri. This small-sized train excursion presented a big-sized train experience. Active volunteers operated the railroad. The WF&P has about 200 members, of which about 60-80 members are the hands-on core. Some members live as far away as California, yet they come to Glencoe periodically, pitch in, and get their hands dirty. One of the volunteers said, “Once you acquire a taste for cinders and smoke, it’s hard to walk away.”

trailer-based layout; each with varied techniques – fully scenicked or jam-packed with structures and accessories; all laden with classic era and modern trains.

The Wednesday night riverboat dinner







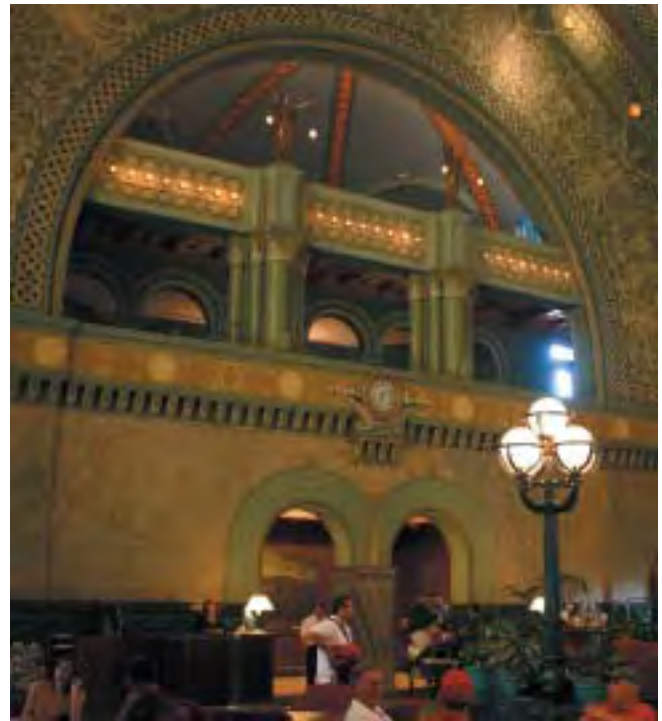
The Arch and Union Station tour. The Arch is the nation's tallest monument. At the peak of The Arch, you can peer out the small windows; on one side you can look down on the Mississippi River and from the other side, look down on the city. The tram ride to the top of The Arch was a marvel. Each car of the tram held five people and rotated slightly during ascent and descent so as to remain level in transit despite the curvature of the arch. Some engineer stayed awake at night figuring out how to build an ingenious solution as an

cruise aboard the sternwheeler Becky Thatcher was a three-star event: fellowship, food, and fun. Cruising by The Arch at night on the mighty Mississippi was an absolutely spectacular sight. We even had a little impromptu entertainment as Betty Findley sang, "Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey?" After a day of train rides, home layout tours, and a night on the water, I can honestly say I've never slept more soundly on a hotel bed than I did that night.

alternative to an elevator. The tiny tram cars might make a person vulnerable to claustrophobia a bit edgy. The ride was quick and before I knew it, I was at the windows and looking straight down from 630 feet up. Wow, what a view!

Union Station is the "poster child" for adaptive re-use projects for historic buildings. This beautifully restored building now houses a Hyatt Hotel, numerous specialty shops, and several restaurants.

On Thursday, I faced the first real dilemma of this Convention, which tour should I take? Which not to take? President Eric's hometown has many attractions and sights to see, but I had to choose only one for that day. I chose





We ate lunch in the Hard Rock Café and enjoyed a walking tour of the old station which is now an urban mall. The station is one of America’s great success stories of revitalizing an historic structure instead of demolishing it to make space for a parking garage or a look-alike concrete, glass, and steel office tower.



This historic building retains its classic charm and is proof that architecture can inspire us beyond functionality. Thanks, St. Louis, for saving and preserving this landmark.

By choosing the tour of The Arch and Union Station, I missed the tours of the Anheuser-Busch Brewery, Forest Park, and National Museum of Transportation. I have it on good authority that those tours were excellent. The raves about the brewery, park, and the museum from LCCA tour-goers went on and on. The 2005 On-site Convention car and the premiere Convention Banquet car were tributes to the zoo at Forest Park.

The Friday tours offered another decision – visiting the St. Louis Metro dispatching and alignment systems, train repair shop, and control center then enjoying an all-day pass on Metro trains – or a visit to Grant’s Farm.



I chose the famous farmstead now owned and operated by Anheuser-Busch. This 281-acre site was the home where General (and President) Ulysses S. Grant lived and worked in the 1850s. It’s now home for exotic animals that roam the



grounds freely along with controlled ones, such as elephants and birds of prey. This facility is truly one of a kind. The tour included the antique horse-drawn carriages on display in the historic Bauernhof, the renowned Cydesdale horses, and



the exquisite stables for prize-winning jumping horses. Afterwards, we headed to Ted Drewe’s frozen custard for a famous “Concrete” snack.







I talked with several dealers, and they were delighted with the enthusiasm of the buyers. Many train items were carried out the door by smiling owners. On Saturday in this very orange environment, members and the public continued the shopping-spree atmosphere. With a dog-earned copy of *Greenburg's Price Guide* in hand, many entered the hall, roamed the aisles, and shopped 'til they dropped.

The members of the Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club had set-up their portable modular layout in a large meeting room of the host hotel. I could smell the loco smoke and hear the steam whistles from the hallway, and so could parents and kids who visited this free display on Saturday. Children's faces lit up as they rounded the

Friday afternoon, our well-established, traditional time for the Lionel Seminar, was for many a highlight of the Convention. This event again attracted a standing-room-only crowd. Jerry Calabrese, CEO of Lionel, and two company executives made informative, candid comments and fielded questions from members.

The Trading Hall in the host hotel opened to members attending the Convention on Friday evening. The hall was full of tables; not one more could be shoe-horned in.



corner of the hallway and heard the sounds of the trains. It was infectious. If you had a bad day, it all went away. Those kids and their parents really brightened-up the area.







As if that showing of trains wasn't enough, LCCA member Joe Holbrook set-up his live steam Southern Crescent miniature train in the parking lot and gave free rides to kids – of all ages. A Southern diesel and a logging steam locomotive also pulled people-loaded cars along a strip of track. LCCA made a lot of new friends that day, and we signed up 40 new members – a Convention record.

The Saturday night banquet and silent auction was an evening for good times with hobby

friends, great food, and memorable entertainment.



This is the traditional time for passing the gavel from the current President, Eric Fogg, to incoming President, Lou Caponi. Lou presented Eric with a parting memento

from the club, a delicate glass-roof train station with "Station Master Eric Fogg" engraved on its signboard. Eric collects toy train stations, so this item will surely earn a special place in his collection.

The entertainment for the banquet celebrated the 1940s and 50s with musical numbers presented by the Starliners; all of whom were "alumni" of that era. Some on-stage stunts with audience participation created some memorable – or slightly embarrassing – moments, depending on your perspective.



Each banquet table was piled high with gifts for those seated at the table. When these gifts were distributed according to plan, one person at each table did not receive a gift. A foul-up? A distribution error? I heard the cries and moans. Before a rebellion could break out, President Lou called all who were "short-changed" a gift to the front of the room and offered them the premiere Convention Banquet car. This very pink Giraffe/Zoo car was a "cousin" to the On-site Convention car, a green Giraffe/Zoo car. Only 252 of the limited-production green cars were produced and all were purchased at the location as a memento and collectible. Only 70 pink cars were made and presented. One can imagine how collectible and valuable that car might become because of its rarity. I heard one lucky recipient had calmly rejected a spontaneous offer of \$100 for his car just minutes after he received it from the club. ~~LOU~~

*Photographs by Ed Richter, Bob Carter, Mike Mottler, and Al Kolis*





# Sneak Preview: The Challenger

by Jerry M. Calkins  
RM 9418

A Union Pacific ad of the early 1950s proclaimed: *IT'S COLORADO CALLING. As soon as summer arrives – and with rail travel conditions greatly improved—we'll be looking for you. Yes, it's Colorado calling – the Colorado of mighty mountains and singing streams invigorating sun-warmed days and restful blanket nights. When you go, there's the swift Union Pacific Streamliner "City of Denver" – overnight, every night, between Chicago and Denver; also fine train service from other points east and west of Denver. Your journey by rail will be the high spot of your vacation or business trip. For unexcelled rail service, to or from the West, go Union Pacific.*

## Trains with a Legacy

No trip to Denver for a LCCA member would be complete without taking a train trip along the Overland Route on one of the famous Union Pacific passenger trains. One of these was the famous "City of Denver" inaugurated in 1937 with a M10000 on point; later that train was manufactured by Lionel as one of their classic models. There were other trains with other names and other routes. One of those vintage trains still runs today; it is well known in the Denver area as the "Denver Post Special" with UP Heritage Fleet steam power up front.

Every year since the early 1900s, with few exceptions, the Denver Post has sponsored with the Union Pacific Railroad a round-trip excursion train ride from Denver to Cheyenne, Wyoming. This trip always occurs during the first weekend of the world's largest outdoor rodeo, Cheyenne Frontier Days, which by tradition is held the last full week of July. Tickets for boarding this special train are provided to newspaper advertisers and VIPs. The trip is designed to promote business and economic development along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains from eastern Wyoming to northern Colorado (see **photo 1**).



## The LCCA Special in 2006

On Monday, July 24, 2006, LCCA members, their families, and guests will be able to join the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and re-live an important bit of railroad history. LCCA has arranged an excursion train trip on that day with the Union Pacific Heritage Program.

On the weekend, The Denver Post Special will travel from Denver to Cheyenne and back. The train would normally layover in the Mile High City and then return

empty to Cheyenne. But LCCA has arranged with UP to "fill 'er up" with passengers (see **photo 2**). This special one-way trip from Denver to Cheyenne will be named The LCCA Special.

Consider this article a "heads up" about this once-in-a-lifetime excursion trip. Be on the lookout for Convention



LCCA officers John Fisher (left) and Eric Fogg visited UP's Ambassador of Good Will, the #3985 Challenger.

registration information and sign-up details to be published in the December 2005 issue of *The Lion Roars* and at the club's Web site ([www.lionelcollectors.org](http://www.lionelcollectors.org)).

Our train excursion will begin on Monday at Denver's Union Station in mid-morning and end in Cheyenne. There will be an opportunity to take pictures and inspect the train at rest at the station (see **photo 3**).





After the “All Aboard!” call, we’ll depart the Mile High City and see the river valleys and the wide-open spaces of the high plains of northern Colorado and southern Wyoming.

UP will arrange a stop along the route for a photo run-by, so bring your camera or camcorder and record the excitement for your family album (see **photo 4**).

LCCA conventioners will be the guests of the Cheyenne Frontier Days Committee while in Cheyenne. We will visit the home of the Union Pacific Heritage Program and tour the UP facilities, roundhouse, and depot. Most of these facilities are generally not open to the public, so it will be like visiting the “inner sanctum” of railroading. At the end of the day, deluxe motor coaches will take us back to Denver.

## The Heritage Fleet

The Union Pacific Heritage Fleet is a collection of historic steam and vintage diesel railroad equipment that has been painstakingly restored and maintained. The motive power is headquartered in Cheyenne, and the rolling stock of passenger cars of the fleet is maintained in Omaha, Nebraska.

With the exception of the famous UP Big Boys (locomotive 4004 of this series is on display in Cheyenne), probably the most notable steam locomotives in regular operation today are the UP 3985 Challenger and the UP 844 FEF-3.

The LCCA Special will be comprised of immaculately restored air-conditioned streamlined passenger cars pulled by motive power from the fleet. An excursion train is typically comprised of 17 to 18 cars including chair cars, lounge cars, and dome cars. The LCCA Special will be scheduled to appear with double-headed locomotives on point: #3985 Challenger and the #844 FEF-3 – a powerful combination.

## The 3985 Challenger

The decade of the 1930s and the Great Depression was an era of challenges in American politics, business, and society. For American railroads, stiff competition with the trucking industry was emerging. Higher speed locomotives were needed to compete with trucks and meet other business challenges.

Union Pacific management felt that an articulated locomotive capable of moving tonnage formerly attached to a 4-12-2 would enable faster schedules at higher speeds; meeting the challenges from the trucking industry. The Union Pacific developed the first 4-6-6-4 type locomotives. The name Challenger was adopted for this class of locomotives because of the challenges it would face.

In a series of five orders, the railroad obtained 105 Challengers from the American Locomotive Company between 1936 and 1943. The 3985 was built and delivered to the railroad in 1943.

The Challengers were mostly assigned to the heavy-traffic western routes. In passenger or freight operation, the



locomotives were used in areas where natural barriers required a response with lots of tractive effort. The stable of Challengers were ideal for use on the open flat plains and deserts of the west including the Wahsatch Mountains of Utah and Sherman Hill in Wyoming.

The 3985 last operated in regular train service in 1957. It was retired in 1962 and stored in the roundhouse in Cheyenne until 1975. The locomotive was saved by the Union Pacific, moved out of the roundhouse in January 1975, and placed just west of the depot in Cheyenne. Many railfans felt this would be its final, permanent display; however, UP decided to restore the 3985 to full operational capability. The Challenger was removed from display and restoration began in September 1979. During the winters of 1979 and 1980, volunteers labored long hours restoring this locomotive.

It was a joyous sight for the restoration crews and railfans when on January 18, 1981, 3985 steamed-up and its safety valves popped-off for the first time in 23 years. The first trial run over the road was a trip from Cheyenne, Wyoming to LaSalle, Colorado.

This Challenger originally burned coal and pulled a tender with a 32-ton capacity. However, coal operations on a modern railroad caused many problems, and in 1990 it became necessary to convert this locomotive from coal to

No.5 oil. The first trip as an oil burner was made on July 24, 1990 from Cheyenne to LaSalle.

Today, the Union Pacific Challenger 3985 is the largest and most powerful operating steam locomotive in the world. It has been overhauled several times and is continually being updated. It is considered Union Pacific's Ambassador of Goodwill.

### The 844 FEF-3

The Union Pacific 800 series of 4-8-4 steam locomotives were considered by many to be "precision engineered giants when steam was at its best." Eventually used in freight and passenger service, the 800 series locomotives were originally designed to meet the challenge of heavier and faster passenger trains for the famous Union Pacific Limited trains on routes over the high plains, the Wahsatch Mountains, and Sherman Hill.

UP purchased three classes of the 800 series locomotives. Each had its unique design changes and improvements over its predecessors. Between 1939 and 1944, the American Locomotive Company delivered a total of 45 to the railroad. The 844 FEF-3 is the last steam locomotive built for and delivered to the Union Pacific in 1944. It represents the pinnacle of modern steam power (see **photo 5**).



5

Despite the famous names – Challenger and Big Boy – applied to other UP locomotives, no official name was considered for Union Pacific’s 4-8-4s. Several factors probably played a role in this decision. First, this wheel arrangement was commonly publicized for general service. Originally, the UP had no intention of using its 800s for freight service; they were to be used exclusively in passenger service. Secondly, since the UP was late in acquiring 4-8-4s, the competition of name recognition for this locomotive class among other western roads was for general and competing service. The Northern Pacific’s 4-8-4 yielded the type name Northern, and Southern Pacific’s 4-8-4 produced Daylights. Union Pacific did not acknowledge popular trade names and always kept the designation 4-8-4 or FEF (four-eight-four). The letter classification was the Common Standard Code used by the road. The “3” in FEF-3 indicated that it was part of the third group of 800 series locomotives delivered.

Diesels took over all passenger service in Nebraska where 844 was running between 1957 and 1959 thereby retiring 844 from active service. However, the locomotive was saved from being scrapped in 1960 and held for special situations.

Many railfans know this locomotive as 8444. The final “4” was added in 1962 to distinguish it from a diesel numbered 844 then in service in the UP 800 diesel series. After that diesel was retired in June 1989, the steam engine regained its rightful number.

It has recently undergone a complete overhaul and put back in service in November of 2004. The 844 FEF-3 has been hailed as the Union Pacific’s “Living Legend” and is expected to keep running for many years.

## Passenger Cars

The Union Pacific was well known for its exceptional passenger service. In recognition of this colorful history, the railroad maintains a fleet of 47 passenger cars. The Heritage Fleet includes 5 coaches, 3 diners, 1 lounge, 2 dome coaches, 3 dome lounges, 3 dome diners, 2 baggage cars, 7 sleepers, 4 power cars, 15 business cars, 1 laboratory car, and 1 track inspection car. Many of these cars will be a part of The LCCA Special.

These passenger cars have a special significance to Union Pacific passenger service and railroading. Coaches such as the Portland Rose, City of Salina, the Katy Flyer, and Texas Eagle; domes such as Challenger and Columbine; and dome diners such as the Missouri River Eagle, Colorado Eagle, and City of Los Angeles have significant places on the UP roster as shown in **photo 6**.

The LCCA Special will also contain an assortment of support and maintenance cars such as Power Car 207, Sherman Hill Concession Car, and the Art Lockman Maintenance Car. These and others have also been restored and will be a part your excursion experience.

This is a train excursion you will not want to miss! 🚂

*Photographs by Johnny Ourso and John Fisher*



*Note: This photo shows #844 double-headed with UP Centennial diesel locomotive #6936. The LCCA Special will be scheduled for duty with #3985 and #844 on point.*



# I Have a Dream – About Toy Trains

by Keith Beyer  
RM 24986

## Part III: Wiring and Finishing the Layout

*Editor's Note: Keith concludes his three-part series on layout building from scratch; from the dream, through the sawdust, into the wiring, and to operation.*

### Workin' on the Railroad – Layin' Track

I have found that no matter how much care one puts into planning a layout, the result never quite works out the way it was planned. I planned my layout with RR-Track™ software. It is highly accurate and automatically figures out the geometry of a track plan without straining the track. In reality, I always fudged the radius of odd loops and



squeezed things together to minimize small gaps in the track. The same was true this time, but I know I was the closest I have ever been to being “right on” from the planned layout to the actual finished layout.

I laid the long outer reversing loop first. This formed the shape of a large “U” with reversing loops at each end and a yard near one end. The two middle curves of the “U” were in the corners of the room; formed by O72 tracks. After laying the track for this loop, I used my 675 passenger set from 1947 to check the distance of the track from the wall for sufficient clearance around the curve. I like using this engine because over time I learned that its drivers hang out from the track farther than any other steam engine I own. If a loop passes the “675 Clearance Test,” then I’m A-OK!

After laying and testing the reversing loop, I set the two inner ovals in place. This included laying several switches; I had two interchange switches between the ovals, two from the outer oval to the transfer track, and an engine yard off the inner oval. As usually happens, I began to see new possibilities once I laid the track down. I changed the engine yard from a two-siding yard to a four-siding yard and moved some buildings I initially planned for that area. I also planned a small freight yard with operating accessories off the transfer track; however, I ran out of the type of curved track I needed; so I improvised a new configuration. I needed two O31 curved track sections for a 90° turn, but I had only one on hand. I used some extra O72 curves to complete this turn. This actually led to a positive repositioning of accessories, and I now have more room between the tracks.

While laying the track, I also placed operating accessories. About 80% of the accessories ended up where I originally planned them. I designed a transfer track off the outer loop for several purposes. First, I can shuttle trains

between the two ovals to the outer, double reversing loop. Second, the transfer track has a freight yard at one end with several freight accessories. Third, I placed my passenger station, baggage platform, and passenger platforms along this track to serve as a passenger center. This transfer siding and the yard on one end of it can be operated with the Lionel® TMCC™.

I can only see part of the yard from the power center where all my transformers are placed. Also, because the opening bridge is between the power center and the switches in this yard, I located the switch controllers closer to the yard. I would have difficulty seeing all the switches from the power center location anyway. This meant that I would definitely need to control track power close to where the action would be. Apart from moving

one of the transformers closer to the yard, my only option would be to use TMCC™ through a Powermaster™ module to control the postwar trains by remote control.

### A Bit More Realism

I don’t particularly like the look of the spaces between the crossties on O31 tubular track. In the past, I placed foam rubber ties painted black in the void spaces. I had some on hand but not enough for this project. Meanwhile, the company stopped making them. I saw an ad for track ties made by Three R Plastics® in *CTT* magazine and ordered some with “try it and see” in mind. When I opened the box, I was pleasantly surprised at how good they looked with simulated wood grain in the crossties and molded-in metal brackets for the rails. I used these all over my layout and will likely get more. The quality is high, and the product is a great value.



Simulated foam or plastic track ties are my secret weapon for dampening track noise a bit, as shown in **photo 2**. In an earlier article in this series, I mentioned my decision not to use Homosote™ on my layout as a noise dampener. Some of the crossties now on the market sit slightly higher than the metal cross ties of the tubular track. This helps dampen the sound a bit, if that is an effect you want.

### Bring in the Power

With track laying complete, I was ready to move to the wiring stage with a vengeance. My basic method for wiring was straightforward. I used 16-gauge solid copper wire for the main power feeders to the track. At about six-foot intervals, I connected a short feeder wire to a CTC clip-on at the track. I know a lot of people recommend soldering wire directly to the track, but I prefer the ease of a CTC clip-on — and it makes any future changes easy. My feeder wire was 18-gauge, stranded audio speaker wire. I tried as best I could to color-code the wiring so that I would know what was going on later.

I always use bare wire for the ground wire – copper, brass or aluminum – so that it's clear which wire is ground. I can connect to it anywhere. I have a ground wire running down the center of every section of the layout. This is especially important as you begin to wire accessories, which may be at any location on the layout.

Despite trying, I ran out of certain colors of wire. Instead of buying more wire in the colors I needed, I used up the excess of the other colors. So, the wiring is about 80% color coded, and the rest may require some head scratching, memory probing, or back-tracking along the path of a wire.

I also used bare wires for accessories and switches. This is not a problem if you use different-color wires upstream AND keep bare power wires from touching bare ground wires. I confess, to speed things up I didn't do either. I spent a couple of hours back-tracking a short circuit to its source, and finally found a bare power wire touching a bare ground wire at one point on the layout. That was a bit frustrating! Although I'm not ready to re-wire, I re-learned that patience is a virtue of life and when wiring a layout. My best advice — do it right the first time!

Another technique I use is creating a power bus where I have a lot of connections to the same power source. For example, for the sidings in the engine yard off one of the loops I was able to use a power bus like the one shown in **photo 3**. I bought a ground bus — the type used in circuit breaker boxes — at a local hardware store for about \$5. The bus had 25 terminals — certainly more than I needed for any one spot, but I simply cut the bus into the sections I needed using a hacksaw. I then screwed the bus section to the underside of the table, connected it to the power source, and fed power from it to individual tracks.

The power for each siding, yard section, and some blocks on the main line ran through an on/off switch. Again, I kept it simple and cheap — a simple on/off light switch at a hardware store costs less than a dollar.



I installed these switches throughout my layout to control power to the tracks. I concealed the wiring and the hardware of the switch by ganging them together and placing a switch plate over them. This presents a clean look at very low cost. It will also make labeling the switches easy to do in the future (when I get around to it).

In one instance I used a three-way switch between the transfer track and the power source. With this one switch, I can flip between power straight from the transformer, and power through the Powermaster; this enables me to use the CAB-1. I like this method because sometimes I prefer to use the ZW throttle to power the trains when they are in clear sight. To me, the ZW handles are more fun to use than the CAB-1; but each to his/her own preference!

### Time for the Accessories

I wired the operating accessories to their own Lionel switches in typical “instruction sheet” fashion — nothing fancy here. I have a separate power wire (bare brass) for the accessories set between 10 to 14 volts depending on the accessory in operation.

One of my ZW transformers is dedicated to providing power for the switches (turnouts). The switches are fed through a dedicated wire (bare aluminum) carrying 18 volts. While this high voltage is not necessary to “snap!” the swivel rails of new switches into position as the switch controller is thrown, it is helpful for many older postwar-era switches whose solenoid plungers have become a bit sticky with age. Even with a good cleaning, many older switches need 18 volts to work properly.



## My Not-Quite-Department-56 Village

Many of the non-train buildings on my layout are “Christmas Village” ceramic items purchased at after-Christmas sales a few years back. I have added a few new ones each year. I found I could get buildings for as little as \$5 that looked great and were produced with good quality. Eventually, I was able to create villages with these buildings because I had enough to spread around. The lamps in these buildings require 120 volts, so I wired them separately rather than go to the trouble of buying low-voltage bulbs that would work with the Lionel transformers. I have a separate 120-volt line for powering the buildings, and this entire line is on a dimmer switch, so I can turn the building lights down with the room lights to simulate a late evening environment. If you don’t provide a dimmer, it’ll look like the buildings are on fire with so much light coming out of them!

If you like to create the illusion of snow in a village, I found two methods that work well. There’s the white, fluffy stuff sold with the buildings. I find this filler OK, but it’s too puffy, hard to thin out, and difficult to avoid the impression of two feet of snow on the ground. The other method is quilt batting. Both are shown in **photos 4 and 5**. Fortunately, my wife is a quilter, and she supplied me with ample scraps for one section of my village. Either way the look is pretty good.

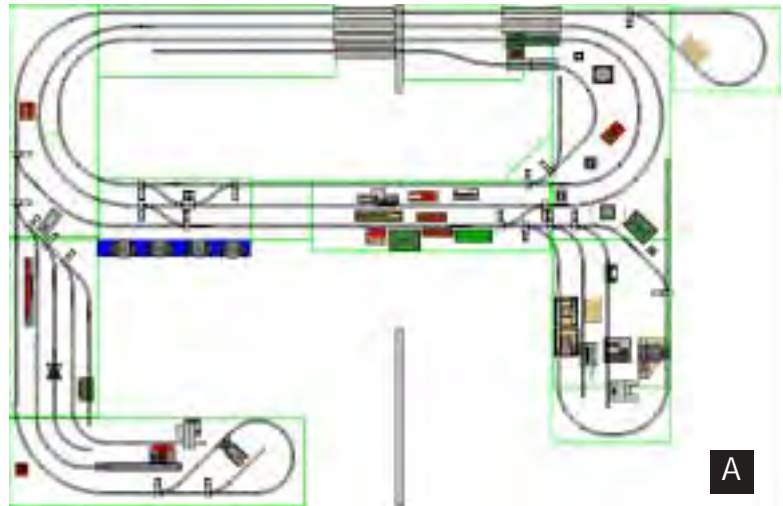


I also like peppering the layout with more-or-less O-scale cars found at hardware or home improvement stores. Although they are inexpensive, they look good. However,

the manufacturers seem to have a penchant for offering convertibles over other styles of cars, and they look out of place in snow scenes!

## Change Is Eternal

While these three articles have told the story of building my layout from start to finish, as we all know, a layout is very much a work in progress. To train layout builders, the process can be a life-long venture, and this gives practical meaning to the metaphysical concept of “eternal life.”



In fact, my layout design changed from the time I finished writing the first article in this series to now! The revised layout is shown in **Figure A**.

After operating the layout for a few months, I decided to add a section of bench work to the lower right side. This allowed me to create a reversing loop by connecting the two ends of the outer sidings. I was also able to lengthen the two inner sidings.

I decided I was not getting much use out of the four engine sidings on the inner loop. I moved one switch to the loop I had just created on the lower right so that I could have a 40-inch-long engine siding there. That seemed to be a good location for engine storage. I looked for another location for a switch so that I would have two sidings in the engine yard. After looking at my track plan for a while, I discovered the perfect spot. I placed a siding in the reversing loop on the lower left that passed right behind the postwar yellow coaling elevator. I was very happy about this serendipitous discovery; the track fit perfectly.

Finally, I focused on the two remaining engine sidings. I was looking for a way to extend one of them for storing a passenger train. Again, after trying different configurations with the RR-Track™ software, I found the best fit was to eliminate the point-to-point trolley line and instead connect this track to the engine siding. Now I had one engine siding and one train storage siding on the inner loop. I’m happy with the changes, and accept the notion that a train layout is always a work in progress! 🚂

*Photographs by Keith D. Beyer*

# Lionel News & Views

by Bill Schmeelk  
RM 6643

## Memorable Souvenirs

As you'll read elsewhere in this issue, our annual Convention in St. Louis was a big hit. Special Lionel souvenirs are one of things that make our annual Conventions so memorable, and this year was no exception. Three LCCA cars were produced for and introduced at the Convention. Each one was a Lionel-made car redecorated for our club by Weaver Models®.

The first 400 registrants received a special car as recognition for registering early. **Photos 1, 2, and 3** show

this car – a Mickey Mouse Flat Car with Boat. It has die-cast trucks and is painted in Lionel orange and blue with unique graphics for our Convention. The flatcar has markings that denote its origin at the Convention. It pays to register early!

LCCA continued a tradition of offering an On-site Convention car for members present at the Convention. **Photos 4 and 5** show the 2006 product, which was a Lionel custom-decorated Giraffe/Zoo car with markings for the St. Louis Zoo. In addition to the markings on the car, Lionel produced a painted brass plaque (shown in **photo 6**) that can be mounted on the sides of the car. Two of these were supplied with each car.

This year marked a significant first for LCCA – a Convention Banquet car. One member at each banquet table received this limited-edition car, which was a color variation of the On-site Convention car.

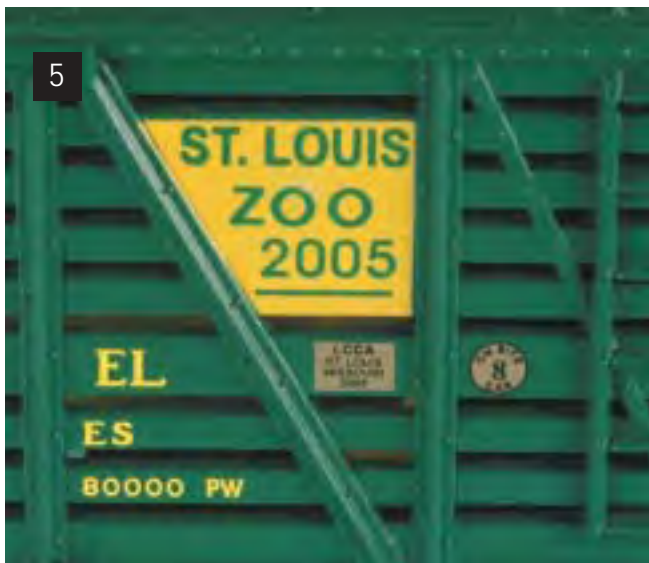




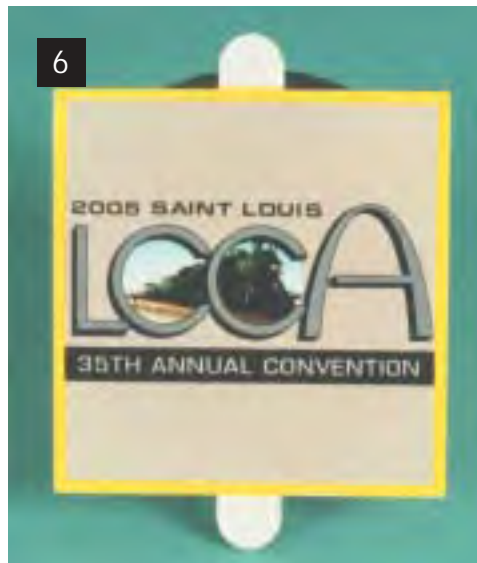
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5



6



first issue. Release #1 in this series contains the first 60 issues. The disc can be used by both PC and Mac users.

Every page of each issue, including the front and back covers, was scanned and organized in

**Photo 7** shows this very pink car, and **photo 8** shows the banquet marking on the top of the car. This car also came with two painted plaques. At an LCCA Convention banquet, every participant receives a special gift at their table, but only a few lucky members received this first-in-a-series Convention Banquet car. They left the banquet in great spirits with a rare collectible tucked under an arm.

### Back Issues on Disc

*O Gauge Railroading* magazine has experimented with a unique way to archive back issues of their publication. I've subscribed to *OGR* for several years. The magazine first appeared in June, 1969 – well before my interest in trains was rekindled. Many of the “pre-Schmeelk” issues contained very useful information which is now available in a digital archive on a CD. This archive begins with the very

digital format. Everything in every original issue is there, including the ads. When you insert the disc into your computer, the program self-starts. Once you reach the home page, you can choose a particular volume and then an issue. Also on the home page is a master table of contents listing each article on the disc and its author. This table of contents can also be searched using your browser. Then by clicking the link, you are taken directly to the beginning of the article. You read it just like you would the magazine – page by page.

Once the magazine pages are on screen, a menu bar on the right side offers some handy navigating tools. You can go page by page, forward or backwards. There is also a page index which allows you to skip to any page in the issue. If you happen to be viewing a regular feature, one that appears

7



8



as a regular column, you can click a button that will take you to the same article in the next or previous issue. For example, if you're reading a Dr. Tinker article, you can click a button and be taken to the first page of the same feature in the next or previous issue. I found this particularly helpful in reading some of the letters to the editor where discussions went from issue to issue. If an article is continued in several issues, you can easily click to the next issue at precisely the spot where the article continues.

I found the Dr. Tinker articles very interesting, and it was easy to jump from one article to the next one in the next issue.

You also have the capability to print-out a page or article. This is especially helpful if there is a plan or diagram you want to use.

I found it particularly interesting to track the growth of Lionel on *OGR* pages since the inception of the magazine in 1969. Soon after that, Lionel began re-issuing trains under the ownership of General Mills.

The release of these digital editions is clearly meant to be an archive and not a substitute for the printed magazine. The discs will lag at least a year or so behind the publication of the magazine.

While at our annual convention this year, we had a chance to visit with the fellow who put this series together for *OGR*, John Holtmann. He is also one of our newer members. I sincerely hope that this form of media becomes a popular way to archive other train magazines.

One of the biggest advantages that I see is the tremendous savings in shelf space. The first two releases in the series cover 111 magazines – that's 10 volumes. The two disks take up only an inch of shelf space. Finding an article on the discs is certainly faster than looking through the hard copies. More releases are promised and eventually all issues will be available in this form. The first two releases sell for \$29.95 each and are available directly from *OGR* at their website [www.ogaugerr.com](http://www.ogaugerr.com). Other releases will follow.






## Step by Step Inspiration

Kalmbach Publishing has released a new book by Neil Besougloff. *Creative Toy Train Track Plans* presents 16 different layouts in detail. The author refers to these layouts as “sensibly sized,” and that’s exactly what they are. They all go well beyond the bounds of a 4x8-foot sheet of plywood, but they are practical in that you won’t find anything like a 18x32-foot layout intended for placement in a triple-stall garage. These are layouts that you can reasonably expect to build. Each of them is designed to fit in either a 9x12-foot area or a 12x12-foot space. Even if you are planning something larger, there is much to learn about layout planning from these examples.

Each plan is asymmetrical and is designed with a specific brand of sectional track in mind – Atlas O®, Lionel O, Lionel O27, MTH®, Ross® – with Lionel used most often. A list of the track required for installation accompanies each plan. Although each plan was designed for a specific type of track, they can easily be modified for use with your preferred track system. Although Lionel’s new FasTrack™ is mentioned, none of the plans were specifically designed to use it. Since FasTrack™ uses some unique radii, the layout sizes would vary somewhat if FasTrack™ was substituted. For example, the smallest curves in FasTrack™ are O36, as opposed to O31 of O-gauge Lionel tubular track.

Each plan is well illustrated with both a track plan and a color 3-D illustration showing all scenery and accessories in place. The 3-D illustrations were produced using the computer software program R-R Track™ available from R&S Enterprises®. A second table in each plan suggests specific accessories by manufacturer and catalog number. The introduction

to the book offers some very useful information on different types of track and defines several types of track arrangements such as a wye, reverse loop, crossings, and crossovers. There are both point-to-point layouts and continuous-run layouts. For those who might want something larger or a different shape, the wide variety of features used throughout the book makes it a very practical guide in designing your own unique layout. The 8-1/4 x 10-3/4 inch book has 80 pages and is soft-cover bound. The book retails for \$18.95 and is available from your local train supplier or direct from Kalmbach by calling 800-533-6644 or going on online to [www.kalmbachbooks.com](http://www.kalmbachbooks.com). 

*Photographs by Bill Schmeelk*



# The Tinplate Cannonball

by Ken Morgan  
RM 12231

## Bipolars across the Mountains

In the years just prior to and immediately after WWI, the CMS&P, later the CMS&P&P (Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific), better known as The Milwaukee Road, electrified parts of its major route to the west coast. The driver was different from what PRR and NYC faced when entering New York. In the urbanized east, pressure from local elected officials to reduce pollution from smoke and increase safety forced the issue. In the far west through the mountains, there were no politicians at that time and very few people; that was one of the railroad's problems.

Another problem was that the steep mountain grades required frequent double — and even triple-heading of steam locos. The cost in fuel, crews, maintenance, and facilities versus the low cost of local hydroelectric power led the railroad to begin an extensive electrification program; initially for 438 miles from Harlowton, Montana, across the Rocky Mountains and the Bitterroot Range to Avery, Idaho. The work was completed in 1916. With WWI came the USRA and its rigid federal control over all railroads; capital spending in particular. The success of the initial electrification project wasn't followed-up



until after the war. Then the second stretch, 207 miles from the city of Tacoma on the Puget Sound east across the Cascade Range to Othello, Washington, was finally completed. But the CMS&P&P was then financially strapped, so it couldn't afford to build the steel towers and heavy-duty catenaries like the eastern roads. The rigging looked more like an interurban line with wires strung from wooden poles. There were lots of trees available out there, too! The last stretch, from Avery, Idaho, to Othello, Washington, was never completed because of lack of funds and the fact that the return on their investment would be less in a relatively flat stretch between mountain ranges.

As part of the sales pitch to attract customers for this late and competitively disadvantaged route, MILW ordered five unique EP-2 class bipolar electric motors from GE in 1918-19. The toy train manufacturers soon took notice — especially in standard gauge but also in O gauge. AF, Ives, Lionel, and several other domestic and foreign manufacturers took advantage of the modern appearance of this motor. It clearly had more visual appeal than the run-of-the-mill rectangular box cabs then commonly seen. Lionel produced three versions in classic period standard gauge, but only one in O gauge. Seemed like a lot of product for a prototype with only five examples, but the company also produced a lot of PRR turbines in the postwar era — all based on a single prototype!

Before taking a look at Lionel's loco, here's a trivia question: what was different about the MILW bipolars? Hint: what does "bipolar" mean?

Lionel's single O-gauge bipolar was numbered 254, 254E, 4, and 4U. They are all essentially the same tinplate loco. "E" signified the presence of the remote control reverse unit as customary, and "U" meant "U" (you) build it. You'll pay much more for the "U" loco on today's collectors' market. As an aside, I could never figure out why the repro manufacturers think I'll pay more for a repro 4U than I would for an original 254. It's the same product, except for the number plate, and it's all a repro, including the number plate!

The 254 was introduced with the new line of more colorful locos using prototypes besides the NYC S-type, which are now referred to as the "classic period" beginning in 1924. It took Lionel a bit longer to get the loco into production

than it did GE/MILW. **Photo 1** shows a clean olive green 254E, a common color, along with the common brass trim pieces. It is a clear step up from the smaller 252 covered in the last issue of *TLR*. It had two headlights, much more trim, and was much bigger at 9-1/2 inches long rather than 8 inches. But if you still have the previous issue of *TLR*, take a peek at the 252. The motors are the same, so the wheelbase is the same. Contrasted to the 252, the 254 almost seems cantilevered over those dinky wheels.

Lionel's pricing of the trains is interesting. There were six classic period O-gauge electric loco body styles: in order



of ascending size, they are: 248, 252 (and 250), 253, 254, 251, and 256. The first year for the new line of locos was 1924, and the first new models were 253, 254, and 256. Others followed over the next three years. The big 256 had two motors; all the others had one. It is the same motor in all of them. All were painted the same way, so the differences were essentially how much metal went into each and how much trim was added; which incurred both parts and labor costs. But looking at the prices, it seems prestige was a major component. At least I can't justify the relative prices based solely on a little more paint, metal, and trim.

To see what I mean, in 1926 the prices were as follows:

2

250	\$6.50	(no reverse)
252	\$8.00	
253	\$9.75	
254	\$12.25	
251	\$15.00	
256	\$18.25.	

If you lived on the frontier — west of the Mississippi — prices were even higher; respectively, \$7.95, \$9.00, \$11.25, \$14.50, \$17.50, and \$21.50. Either way, that was a lot to pay for the size of the loco, but the second motor in the 256 looked like a bargain! When E units were introduced, that added about \$5 per loco. That is, the price without the E unit was \$4.50 to \$5 less than the same loco with the remote reverse. Given this, it is interesting to see what the depression-era economy did to prices by 1933:

252E	\$6.00
253E	\$7.75
254E	\$9.00.

The 250, 251, and 256 were gone by 1933. All the prices were down, and so was the delta for size. The depression soon drove Lionel into bankruptcy, a sign of the times.



Let's go back to the 254. **Photo 2** shows a three-quarter view and gives a good look at the rounded hood. Think back again to the 252. Its hood is stepped, like the prototype S class, but it is softly rounded. I assume that was easier to render than a sharp bend as in the prototype or, for that matter, the 150 series locos. In fact, when I got my first 252, I wasn't sure whether it was supposed to be an S class, or a funny-looking bipolar, since the only real difference is the fully round hood on the 254. So much for "scale detailed," which came later from the fertile minds of the Lionel marketing department!

The car bodies were also different. Not the more common series of boxes, the EP-2 used two nearly identical, rounded-nose units which were bolted to the eight-wheel trucks and turned with them on the curves. The weight of the locomotive is rigidly carried on the inboard eight-wheel assemblies while the outer ends of the car bodies are supported on the six-wheel trucks. These end units carry the electrical gear and various auxiliary equipment plus the crew cabs, and that's where the bulk of the weight was concentrated. The center unit floated on brackets supported by the end units. It carried the train heat boiler and its fuel oil and water bunkers. Three body parts were supported by four frame units and trucks. Neat! Of course, Lionel solved tracking problems by using only four wheels. Sure makes it easier to put it on the track, too.

Unlike MILW's rather colorful loco, Lionel's bipolar came in several solid colors, mostly variations of green. The 254 came originally in dark green, as did all the earlier 700/150 series locos and the earliest classic period electrics. Later it was painted olive green, with or without red trim on the bead at the bottom of the body, which then came with or without red vents. It was also produced in pea green, with or without orange vents and/or bead; apple green, Mohave, and red – all of which had black frames. There is also an apple green version with a dark green frame. The 254E offered fewer colors: olive green with a red bead, pea green, with or without the orange bead and vents, and orange. All had black frames.

Most are now in the \$250 - \$350 range if rated excellent. Red or orange examples are listed around \$500. The #4 came in orange or gray. It had the Bild-a-LoCo motor, and commands a price premium on the collector market. It list for about \$1,000 in the *TM Price Guide*; a bit less than the *Greenberg Price Guide*. The #4U is even more collectible. It's the same product as the orange #4, but it came in kit form. To reap the collector price of \$2,000, you'll need the whole kit. All prices are based on excellent condition.

After several mergers and consolidations, much of the Milwaukee Road is gone. For persons who enjoy spectacular scenery and outdoor exercise, the former roadbed is now a bicycle trail for much of the previously electrified route. Most of what is still in service is now part of SOO Line which took it over via merger in 1986. SOO Line is a Canadian Pacific subsidiary operating under its own name.

The E2s were retired starting in 1958. In 1962, the 10251, previously E2, was donated to the National Museum of Transport in St. Louis. Those who attended this year's LCCA Convention may have seen the only one remaining. The other four were scrapped. But you can still purchase a bipolar, either in scale or tinplate!


And what's different about the bipolars?

The motors are built directly onto the axles, so the axles are effectively the armatures of the motors. They also have only two poles, which indicated to me that they could cog, but since there are so many axles, I assume this was not a problem. One thing that the Lionel version had more of than the prototype — motors with three poles; which avoids the cogging problem. It will start without a push, as needed by the only electric motors I have with two poles.

**Photo 3** shows an O-scale version of the bipolar. Yes, I have strayed and purchased items from that other manufacturer. It's a pretty loco. The real bipolar was a unique loco from several points of view. The mainframe assembly is one of the more complex designs around. It involves four separate units articulated with ball and socket joints. The outboard trucks each have an unpowered pilot axle, while the rest of the axles are all motorized, which makes it a 1-B+D+D+B-1. This wheel arrangement helped it handle the comparatively rough roadbed. Remember, this railroad was built on a tight budget, not PRR's "Standard of the World."

I want to thank Ray Connolly and Charlie Weber for reminding me that George Tebolt carries combination couplers. I've been buying parts from George for years. Don't know how I missed that – consider it a "senior moment." If you have the original latch coupler and just want to convert it, then my method still applies! Charlie also noted that Bill Vagel (among others) produced repro wheels without any identification, so my gut feeling that the wheels on my terra cotta 252 are likely repros may be correct. He also commented that the 252E comes with a pawl reverse unit, not the pendulum, which probably wouldn't fit in the small loco. So maybe I can add to my stable of 252s!

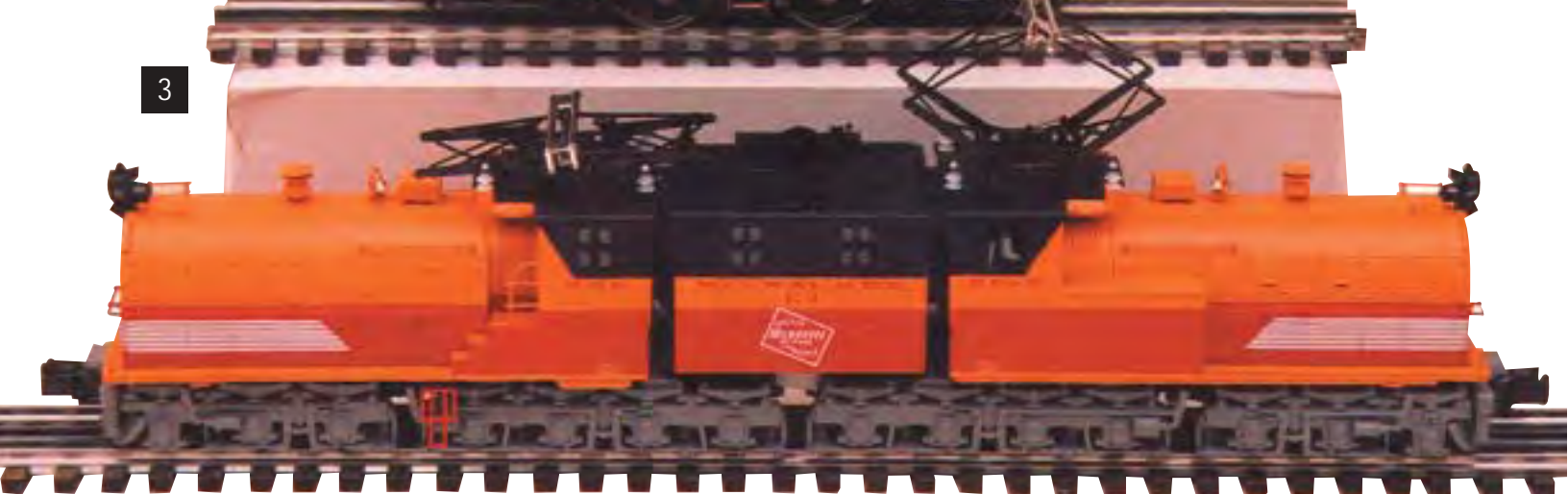
Information sharing is what makes the LCCA great.

See you next time along the rails of The Tinplate Cannonball. 

*Photographs by Ken Morgan*



3





# Toy Trains in a Real Trolley

by Jim Boylan  
RM 2125

*Editor's Note: Imagine an O-gauge layout inside an actual operating street car trolley on the grounds of a museum – an interesting juxtaposition for both train and trolley aficionados. But there's no need to imagine it, because the action is real. LCCA member Jim Boylan in Pennsylvania and the helpful staff of a trolley museum in Connecticut have made it so.*

For several years, I have coordinated a multi-faceted, train-related event for toy train hobbyists and trolley railfans at the Shore Line Trolley Museum in East Haven, Connecticut. With assistance from the museum staff, I designed and maintained the O-gauge layout as a permanent 7x14-1/2 feet layout within an 1899 operating trolley car. For protection from the weather, the trolley is usually stored under roof; but if the weather is good, it can be operated on tracks and parked outside so visitors can enter it and enjoy the train layout in the open air.

This holiday-season event has been a crowd-pleaser for visitors to the museum in the past. This year, the dates of operation will be Saturdays and Sundays, November 26 through December 18. I'll be on board the trolley and at the controls of the layout during the early weekends of the 2005

Christmas season. The museum is open those weekends from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. There's a modest admission fee.

Again this year, a second, larger 8x16-foot layout with all-O72 curves will also be in operation inside the station building at the museum. Because of the large-radius curves, it's a great layout for running Standard O trains. LCCA members may bring their trains to the museum and operate them on either layout as guest engineers. By making an arrangement in advance, a limited number of members may receive free passes if they either bring trains to run on the layouts or volunteer to help staff the event at the Shore Line Trolley Museum, 17 River Street, East Haven, Connecticut. The museum phone number is 203-467-6927; call for directions if you get lost.

The museum offers on-rail experiences including heated trolley car rides with hot chocolate, cookies, and a visit with Santa. He always has a gift for each child.



*A 671RR Korean-War-era Pennsy Turbine pulls assorted O-gauge cars on the museum layout on the track at the near-right. A fast-running original Scout set (thus the blur) runs past Jim on the next track; two cars were added to it in 2004. The "Silver Streak" five-car passenger set with a 2055 Pacific steam engine on point is at the left in the background, along with a Canadian National passenger train.*

For more information about or to volunteer for this event, call me at (215) SKyline 7-7444; it's OK to leave a message on my answering machine. Or send a note to me via USPS at 122 Monroe Avenue, Pennel, Pennsylvania, 19047-4058 or an e-mail message to 104577.651@compuserve.com. 🚂

*Photograph provided by Shore Line Trolley Museum*

# LCCA Board Minutes

by John Ourso  
CM 33

## Outgoing Board of Directors Meeting

St. Louis, Missouri, July 25, 2005

President Fogg called the meeting to called to order at 2:01pm.

Roll Call by Director and acting Secretary Ourso. Those present were: President Fogg, IPP Fisher, President Elect Caponi, Treasurer Johnson, Directors Carter, Kolis, Ourso, Overtoom, Schmeelk, Information Manager Black, *TLR* Editor Mottler, Constitution Committee Chairman Findley, and LCCA Photographer Richter. Guests included Incoming Treasurer De Vito.

President Fogg announced the appointment of Jerry Calkins as Secretary for 2005-06. He will join the Board on Wednesday and promises to be an asset to this group.

Motion by IPP Fisher, seconded by Director Overtoom to accept the minutes of the fall 2004 Board of Directors Meeting as published. Motion passed.

## 2005 Convention Update

IPP Fisher noted there has been a change in the Amtrak tour, with a new destination – Springfield, IL. Other than that, everything is in order for the week. The Convention is off to a great start and should be exciting for all LCCA members attending.

Advertising Manager Mottler presented information about the public relations and promotional plans developed in advance of the Convention. The plan is to generate public awareness and participation through free train activities, an operating layout, news coverage, and some paid advertising. Hopefully the turn-out on Saturday will yield a number of new members.

## 2006 Convention

IPP Fisher presented an update of the 2006 Convention in Denver. He noted there are going to be several exciting tours that week and members will not want to miss this convention. The next Board Meeting will be held at the Marriot Hotel in Denver on September 23-25, 2005.

## 2005 Convention Car

President Elect Caponi reported on the status of the 2005 Convention Car, a Standard “O” flatcar with a powered and a non-powered speeder on board. Order deadline is September 1<sup>st</sup> with an expected ship date in late December 2005. This car marks a change from past practice, and it promises to be an exciting, collectible car.

## Reports

IPP Fisher reported that there were three member-to-member complaints this year. All have been successfully resolved.

Treasurer Johnson reported that the LCCA remains in a sound financial position. He anticipates additional revenues from the Convention, especially from the Club sales area.

*The Lion Roars* Editor Mottler reported on the proposed content of articles in the works for the October 2005 through June 2006 issues of the magazine. A brief recognition ceremony for authors published in *TLR* during the past year is planned for Saturday of Convention week.

The Web Site Report was provided by Information Manager Black for absent Web Site Chairman Tribuzi.

Online voting was discussed and a motion was made by Director Schmeelk, seconded by IPP Fisher, to continue to investigate this issue and determine what, if any, effects it might have on the Club. Motion passed. President Fogg appointed Constitution Committee Chairman Findley to lead the work on this issue and asked him to begin by discussing the idea with the Club’s attorney.

Information Manager Black reported that the Club has 8,113 members and 43% of those members have e-mail addresses on file with the LCCA Business Office.

*Interchange Track/eTrack* Report was presented by Information Manager Black. He showed that in the July 2005 issue of the *Interchange Track*, 91% of the ads were managed on *eTrack*.

Motion to move into Executive Session was offered by Director Ourso, seconded by Director Overtoom at 4:58pm.


The Board returned from Executive Session at 5:05pm.

Director Overtoom moved, seconded by IPP Fisher, to move *Interchange Track* ad development to the all-electronic system tested with the July issue. Motion passed.

2005-2006 Election Results were presented by President Fogg.

President Elect	Richard Johnson
Treasurer	Dennis DeVito
Director (Three Positions)	Larry Black
	John A. Fisher
	Craig Tribuzi

President Fogg recognized the outgoing officers and directors for their outstanding efforts while in office. He also shared his appreciation for the support of the Board during his two-year term of very enjoyable service.

There being no other pending business, Director Ourso moved to adjourn, seconded by Director Overtoom. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m. 



# LCCA Board Minutes

by John Ourso  
CM 33

## Incoming Board of Directors Meeting St. Louis, Missouri, July 25, 2005

The meeting was called to order by President Caponi at 7:40 p.m.

Roll Call by Director and Acting Secretary Ourso confirmed those present as: President Caponi, IPP Fogg, President-elect Johnson, Treasurer De Vito, Directors Black, Carter, Fisher, Ourso, *TLR* Editor Mottler, Constitution Committee Chairman Findley, LCCA Photographer Richter, Members Kolis, Overtoom and Schmeelk. Absent: Secretary Calkins, Director Tribuzi.

President Caponi announced the committee appointments for 2005-2006.

Motion to reappoint Mike Scheurich as Attorney of Record by Director Black; seconded by Director Fisher. Motion passed.

Motion to reappoint Mike Scheurich as Registered Agent by Director Black; seconded by Director Fisher. Motion passed.

President Caponi announced the fall Board of Directors meeting to be held in Denver at the Marriott Tech Center September 23-25.

President Caponi welcomed the new board members to their term of service.

At 7:54 p.m., with no further business pending, a motion to adjourn the meeting was offered by Director Ourso; seconded by Director Carter. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned. 🚂

## Upcoming Train Meets

Lexington, KY – November 25-26

Host Harry Overtoom announces a new and better location for the upcoming LCCA-sponsored Model Train and Railroadiana Show and Flea Market at **The Thoroughbred Center** on Paris Pike in Lexington, Kentucky. The center is 2.5 miles north on US highway 27 from I-75 exit 113.

Setup and early bird trading for members only will be Friday evening, November 25, 6-9 pm. On Saturday, November 26, the doors will open at 8 a.m. for admission to members only, and the public will be admitted from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. LCCA members and families will be admitted free, and the public will pay a \$4 admission charge. As always, non-member children under 12 will be admitted free if accompanied by a paying adult. Membership applications will be accepted at the door.

Several operating layouts will be on display during the show and all scales will be included: G, O, S, HO, and N. To book a table(s) at this show (\$15 to members and \$22 for non-members), call Bill Crace at 859-299-2423. Up to 120 tables will be available. For more information, contact Co-hosts Larry Black at 502-695-4355 or Winfrey Adkins at 859-873-3714. A special room rate will be available at the nearby Red Roof Inn for those wanting to stay overnight; call 859-293-2626 and mention "LCCA."

Naperville, IL – December 3, 2005

The holidays, Santa Claus, and Lionel Trains – what a wonderful combination! Join Chuck Prock, Sigmund Zemba, Lou Rosetti, Paul Flood, and co-hosts Len Hopkins and Larry Brongel for the 2005 LCCA Christmas Train Meet on Saturday, December 3, in Naperville Central High School at 440 West Aurora Avenue in Naperville, Illinois. Registration and set-up will begin from 7 to 8:30 a.m.

Trading for LCCA members only will be from 8:30 to 10 a.m. The public will be invited to participate from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Refreshments will be available, and kids (of all ages) will enjoy an operating train layout. Santa Claus will give Lionel and MTH catalogues to all children who visit him from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. LCCA members and their families will be admitted free. Adult guests pay five dollars, and non-member children under ten accompanied by an adult will be admitted free. Tables are \$15 each. Based on past experience, early table reservations are strongly suggested.

For more information and/or to register, contact co-hosts Len Hopkins at 630-420-9066 or Larry Brongel at 708-784-1894.

# Toy Trunk Railroad

by Erik Sansom



# A Family Affair

by "Uncle Herb" Koch  
RM 22758  
and the Stratton Kids

Join a train club and see the world; at least, St. Louis. What's what the three kids of the Stratton family learned as a result of their participation in the world's greatest hobby through the LCCA Convention in St. Louis.

The Stratton family – Kevin and Kathy (dad and mom) and their children, Lauren, Heather, and Kevin Jr. – joined the Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club and began working on the club's modular layout, cleaning the rails, smelling the loco smoke, and running the trains. During the Convention, they demonstrated Lionel's TMCC technology built-in to the layout to other kids and shared the fun of the hobby. Here are their reactions to the Convention experience, told in their own words.

## Lauren Stratton, 12

I am part of the Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club. My dad and my brother Kevin joined the club last year. I wanted to see the CLRC train layout, so I went with them to find out what it was. I enjoyed the trains, and when my dad told us the LCCA Convention was coming up at St. Louis, I couldn't wait to go.



*Lauren Stratton pushed a load of train stuff from the travel trailer to the large room reserved for the Midwest's largest portable modular layout.*

On Wednesday, we left home at 3:30 a.m. and got there at about ten o'clock. We set-up the layout right away because it had to be ready and open that night. When the layout was set up, I ran the trains, worked the barrel loader, and operated the crane.

On Thursday, we got to operate the layout with Uncle Herb and other club members. I showed visiting kids how to control the trains. We went to the Get Acquainted Party and met a lot of people and traded train cards. I collected all twelve different cards for a complete set. After dinner, I entered the drag race. The trackside display showed the timing of each race for the engines on the track. When the GO light turned on, I started my #280 New York Central steam engine. I lost to a faster train, but the race was very exciting.

The Convention changed how I feel about trains. Now I can run trains on the CLRC layout and work the accessories. My dad is building a layout in the basement of our house, so I can run the Illinois Central train I purchased in the Trading Hall on our home layout. I am very happy Uncle Herb told us about the Convention. It was a great experience, and I hope I can go to another Convention soon. By the way, did I mention how cool my dad is for taking us to the LCCA Convention in St. Louis?

## Heather Stratton, 11

This year for a vacation, we went to the LCCA Convention in St. Louis. At first, I thought it would be like any other vacation I had been on, but I was pleasantly surprised. We spent a lot of time at the modular layout, but we also did some family things like going to The Arch, visiting the Budweiser Brewery, and seeing Grant's Farm.



*Heather Stratton assisted with the installation of the layout and coached other kids how to run it.*

When the Swap Meet was opened to the public on Saturday, we spent the whole day showing kids how to control the track accessories and trains with the CAB-1. I showed a LCCA member how to work the crane. I had lots of fun. I hope we can go again next year!

## Kevin Stratton, Jr., 7

I really love trains. Last year, I got my first train, a steam engine that smokes and makes noise like a real train. It's really cool! The CLRC took the modular layout to the LCCA Convention. I helped unload the CLRC trailer and set up the track. I let my dad and sisters help also. We had a great time running the trains and showing other kids how to operate the barrel loader and the sawmill. 🚂



*Kevin Stratton, Jr. wheeled-in a load of really important stuff — the snacks.*

*Photographs by Herb Koch*



## At Trackside

### LCCA Members in Action

#### Ringgold, Georgia

Some good ol' boys down south presented a well-attended, LCCA-sponsored train show on July 2 in the Chattanooga area at the Catoosa Colonnade in Ringgold, Georgia.

Seventy-six LCCA members attended this show and brought 34 family members along. People from Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Virginia, Indiana, and New York attended the event. Counting 54 paying guests and their six family members, the total participation was 170. There were more than 80 tables of trains offered for sale.

Chuck Campbell (RM 20521) of Huntsville, AL; Joe Glass (RM 24204) of Clinton, TN; and Mike Smith (RM 21988) of Oak Ridge, TN; brought operating layouts to the meet, and these action centers were a highlight for all attendees.

Special thanks go to Meet Co-hosts George Baltz (RM 14094) who handled advertising and assisted at registration, and Ron Herman (RM 1761) who assisted with table layout and registration. Also, many thanks to Jack Ellis (RM 14155) who produced and placed directional signage and arranged for the BBQ dinners, and to Raymond Siler (RM 18796) who assisted with registration. Finally, our thanks go to LCCA officers Eric Fogg, Lou Caponi, and Dick Johnson for their support.

*Text and photographs  
by Bill Stitt*



*The trains ran continuously on Chuck Campbell's 8x8-foot layout. A KW and a new generation ZW provided the power to trains running on Fastrack ovals and sidings.*



*Joe Glass (at left) re-railed a Santa Fe locomotive on the main line as Mike Smith prepared to power-up their 8x12-foot layout.*



*Members George Baltz (at left) and Raymond Siler handled the registration table just outside the Train Meet hall. Every non-member participant received a large manila envelope with recent issues of TLR inside and a membership application.*



# Murder on the Crescent

## Part II: From Anticipation to Awareness

by Grazyna J. Kozaczka  
RM 19361

*Editor's Note: An agile-minded Amtrak passenger and self-declared amateur detective had formulated a solution for a strange case of murder on board a train. As the case continues, she eagerly seeks an opportunity to present it to the authorities.*

As a lover of mystery fiction and a serious, although admittedly amateur, student of masters of the genre like Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, and Joe Leaphorn, I believed I could apply in this situation what I had learned from their experience and expertise.

I replayed in my memory everything I had seen in compartment six. Since there was no obvious sign of a struggle, either the murdered man was caught by surprise, maybe while dozing in his chair, or he was killed by someone he knew. The pillow of the second chair facing the dead body was slightly crumpled – as if someone had reclined there – but it could have been left that way because the victim has switched seats for a more comfortable position. Both the ceiling and wall lights were on, and several pages of what looked like computer printouts lay scattered on the floor near his feet.

I was pleased with how much I noticed in just a few moments, yet I also had a nagging feeling that I may have missed a vital clue. Was there something else? My mind didn't immediately supply any more hints.

I recalled dinner the night before. Did my dinner companion tell me anything that could be a clue? Now I regretted not paying closer attention to his ramblings. I recalled that he mentioned a wife from whom he had separated years before and to whom he had paid a generous monthly allowance. Yet he refused to go through with the divorce because of crooked financial dealings. Did she have designs on his considerable fortune?

And what about the son who worked as his business partner? Perhaps "junior" had a motive. He hadn't mentioned his son by name and had referred to him as "my boy" which did not sound like a term of endearment; rather, a belittlement of the hapless young man. I sensed the old man's contempt when he complained, "He just hangs on to my coat tails." Could this be a case of patricide, the ultimate act of rebellion against a father?

"Too extreme," I thought and crossed-out the wife and the son from my list of suspects. I concentrated instead on a third person he mentioned with obvious agitation at dinner. "The witch," he called her, and he used the words with a poisonous tone while he described some hanky-panky in the mayoral election in Riverton. According to my now-very-dead former dinner companion, this "witch" was also involved in some shady practices in the construction business.

At that time, I only half-listened to him and dismissed his diatribe as an indirect form of self-congratulation for avoiding the fallout of her felonious behavior and dodging her disgusting green claws. I glanced with relief at my own bright red nails. No resemblance there!

Then the "Ah-hah" moment flashed before me. I pulled together the pieces and fit them into a pattern of murder. I was ready to offer my services to the police when we arrived at the next station.

The train arrived in Greensboro only a few minutes off schedule. I was surprised and impressed by Amtrak's performance, but not impressed with the police presence. As the train pulled slowly into the station, I positioned myself by the window. I fully expected to see dozens of FBI agents outfitted in dark, intimidating jackets with huge FBI letters emblazoned across the backs.

The platform was nearly empty; just seven or eight men who did not look any different than middle-aged business





travelers. I sensed there were FBI agents in the area working under cover. The group did not reflect the typical passenger mix – families eager to stay together for boarding, children struggling to lug the suitcase of a visiting grandma, or earphone-equipped collegians with fluffy pillows under their arms.

I noticed that they were not letting regular passengers board the train.

We were quarantined. This was easy to do, but I wondered what would happen to the passengers bound for Greensboro. Would the authorities keep them on the train until at least a preliminary investigation was concluded? A few passengers de-trained (a word beloved by the train personnel). Two of the men on the platform approached them immediately and escorted them to the station building, probably for interrogation.

But what about the rest of us; especially me, since I had vital information to present to law enforcement officials. I wondered if commendations were offered to citizens like me who offered valuable assistance to the authorities.

I now remembered green claws, right on the train, right in our sleeping car. Last night, the woman in line ahead of me at the refreshment counter wrapped one hand around a Styrofoam cup as she poured herself a coffee with the other hand. I purchased a bottle of water and left. Now the full image came to me – inch-long, green-painted nails with a golden tint and set with a tiny rhinestone near the cuticle. We exchanged a frosty “Hello,” and she disappeared into a compartment near the refreshment stand.

Another semi-remembered detail arose from my recall of the previous evening. I had order a medium-rare filet mignon for dinner, and the knife handle of the table setting seemed very much like the handle of the knife sticking out from the victim’s chest. The police could check the green-manicured woman’s dinner order form and confirm that she ordered steak. Her dramatic slide to the floor was a feint, a comical show that concealed the motion of hiding the knife in her outfit.

I saw how the computer print-out on the floor of the victim’s compartment fit into my analysis of the crime. The old man was probably working on collecting evidence against her. I wondered why she didn’t take the papers with her after killing him. I may never know. I couldn’t wait for the police to talk to me. I had this case sewn up and ready to hand over to them.



Would an award be presented to me for assisting the authorities? Would my name be cited in the newspapers? Maybe a producer from the Larry King Live cable TV show would seek me out for an interview.

Then the train started to move, but it didn’t gather much speed before it stopped again. An announcement from the conductor informed all on board that we had temporarily been moved to a side track “to resolve technical difficulties” – obviously, a lame cover story. They did not want to cause a panic among passengers who at this point in time didn’t need to know that a vicious killer might be aboard.

I wanted to see some action and to be a part of it. Fortunately, I did not have to wait long. The conductor put his head through the open door of my compartment and asked testily, “Would you please follow me?” without even a hint of a smile. We squeezed past a couple of agents busy with what I assumed were routine crime scene procedures – gathering fingerprints, taking photographs, and shooting videotape. The “grilling room” was set up in the dining car.

In my mind, I transported myself into the dining and salon car scenes from my favorite movie, *Murder on the Orient Express*. The irony of my situation compared to the movie felt thrilling, and I imagined the final scene with my announcing the solution to this murder. The agent who approached me had nothing in common with the brilliant

and somewhat sinister Albert Finney who performed the role of Hercule Poirot. He appeared quite ordinary, slightly overweight, balding, and ill-fitted for a somewhat rumpled gray suit.

He extended his hand and said one word, “Johnson.” I squeezed his hand eagerly and blurted out not only my name but also an assurance of how glad I was to have the opportunity to talk to him and be of assistance in solving an unspeakable crime. He offered no response, so I continued, “I know who did it. I figured it all out before we arrived in Greensboro. I hope you have not let any passengers slip through your fingers. You should be looking for ...”

He stopped me in mid-word. “I’ll appreciate any assistance, but first, would you mind repeating your name and address, then explaining the reason for your travel.”

“It was the woman with the long green nails. I saw her in our car – blonde and heavily made-up. She should be fairly easy to spot even if she tried to change her appearance. You should search for her immediately. It’s possible that she got off during the night. But that shouldn’t be a problem either, because I know who she is and can identify her.”


I wanted to continue my story about Rivington, dirty deals, computer printouts, and such. I had to stop since I saw the cold-blooded murderess walk into the dining car. “Her, she ...” I could manage only a whisper to my interrogator. He turned slowly and looked at the woman. Somehow she did not now look cruel; instead, she seemed rather sad with smudged make-up around her eyes.

“Good,” I thought and presumed she already felt at least some remorse for her crime.

Johnson turned back to me and matter-of-factly announced, “This is one of our best agents. Obviously, you will have to revise your solution of the crime.” I was stunned. I collected all the clues and drew a conclusion based on the facts. Where did I go wrong?

“Why is a star agent on this train?” I asked Johnson, but I didn’t really expect an answer. He surprised me again. “She and the murdered man were part of an undercover operation designed to catch narcotics smugglers who are moving drugs from the Gulf Coast on our trains. Our agents, using different disguises, have traveled up and down the east coast to discover patterns of passenger and crew behaviors. You got it all wrong, yet I appreciate your powers of observation, attention to detail, and your creative search for patterns. That’s why I think you can still help us. I want you to remember everything about your journey, however insignificant. Tell me all you can recall about other passengers and the crew.”

Although stunned by his revelations, I had no time to dwell on my embarrassing mistake. I closed my eyes and began the now-irrelevant story of my trip. I realized that there would be no fame awaiting me.

Someday, maybe I would have the quiet satisfaction of reading a newspaper and learning that a FBI sting operation had shut down a major train-bound drug smuggling operation. 


*Illustrations by Erik Sansom*





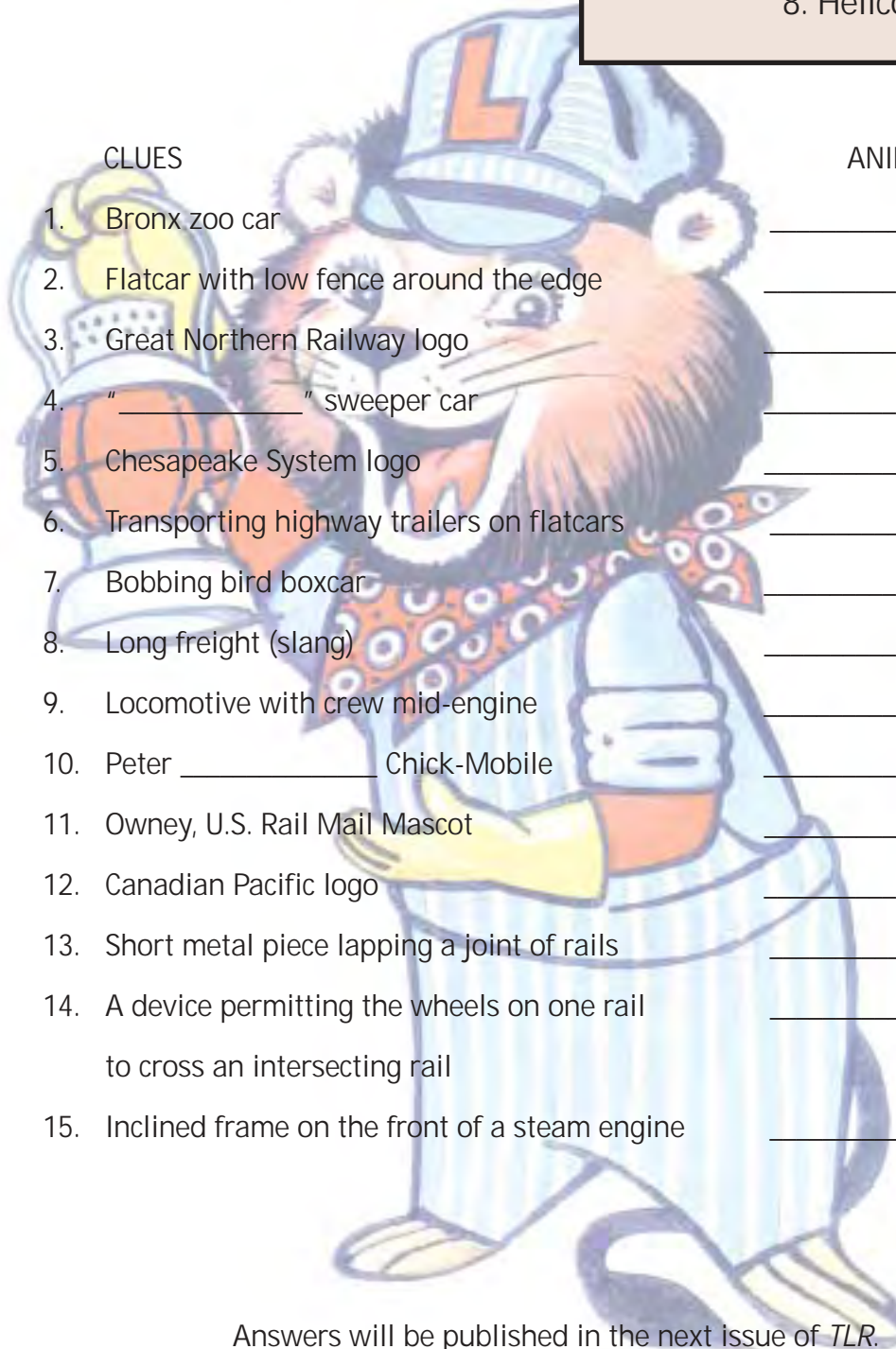
# A Lionel Puzzlement

by Gene H. Russell, Ed.D.  
RM 24608

The Lionel lion has numerous friends, wild and domestic, at Lionelville® and in the world of model railroading. From the “beastly” clues provided, identify the animal or animal-related railroad term to successfully complete this puzzlement. Are you “game?” 

## Answers to June Puzzle

1. Trailer
2. Flatcar
3. Petroleum
4. Articulated
5. Poultry
6. Forklift
7. Streamliner
8. Helicopter



CLUES	ANIMAL
1. Bronx zoo car	_____
2. Flatcar with low fence around the edge	_____
3. Great Northern Railway logo	_____
4. “_____” sweeper car	_____
5. Chesapeake System logo	_____
6. Transporting highway trailers on flatcars	_____
7. Bobbing bird boxcar	_____
8. Long freight (slang)	_____
9. Locomotive with crew mid-engine	_____
10. Peter _____ Chick-Mobile	_____
11. Owney, U.S. Rail Mail Mascot	_____
12. Canadian Pacific logo	_____
13. Short metal piece lapping a joint of rails	_____
14. A device permitting the wheels on one rail to cross an intersecting rail	_____
15. Inclined frame on the front of a steam engine	_____

Answers will be published in the next issue of *TLR*.

