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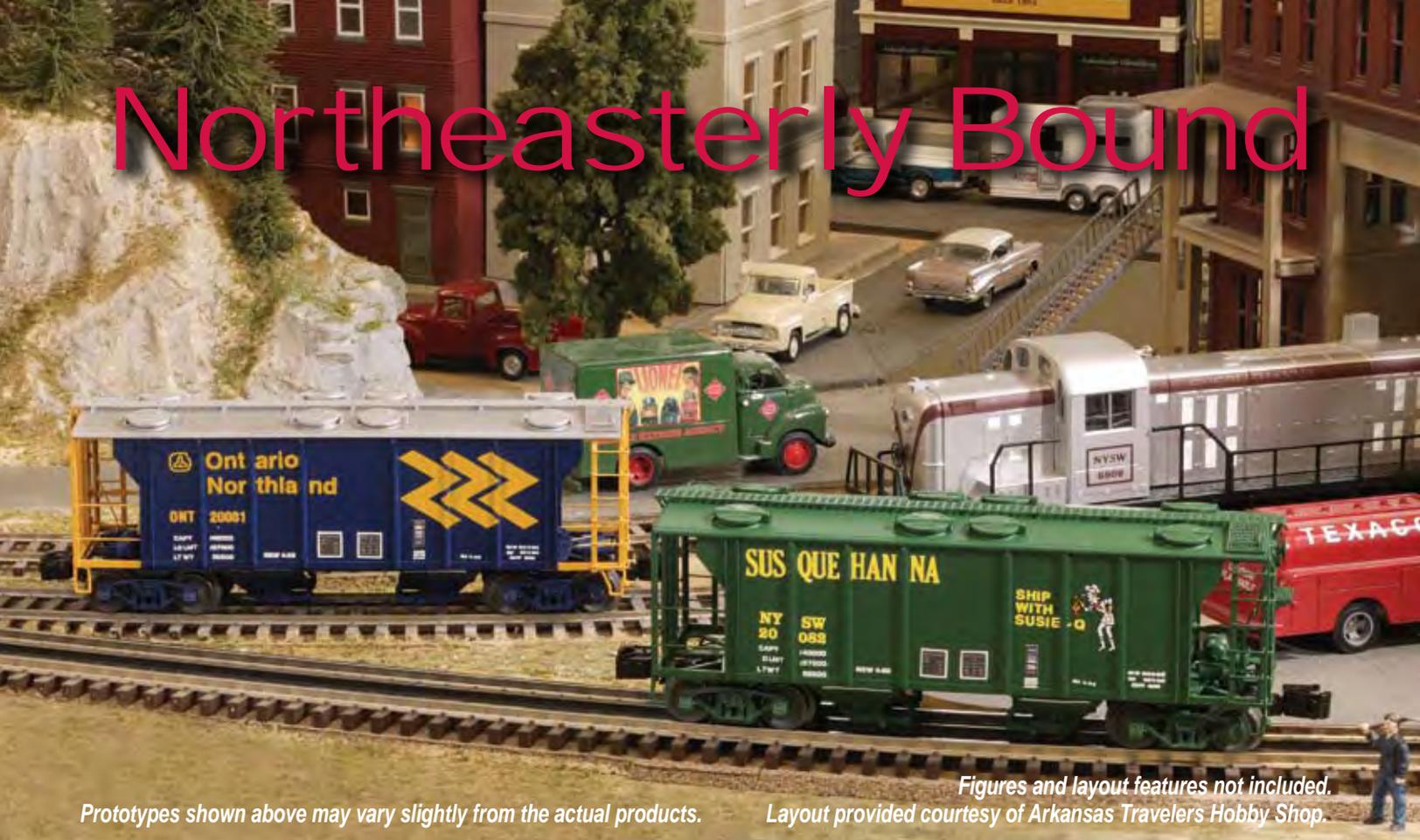
The **Lion Roars**



PUBLISHED BY THE LIONEL® COLLECTORS CLUB OF AMERICA IN FEBRUARY, APRIL, JUNE, OCTOBER, DECEMBER



Northeastly Bound



Prototypes shown above may vary slightly from the actual products.

Figures and layout features not included. Layout provided courtesy of Arkansas Travelers Hobby Shop.

The northern international border unites more than divides two great nations, and in that spirit, the Lionel Collectors Club of America (LCCA) offers these two distinctive cars of that area — “Susie Q” and Ontario Northland RR — to members. This two-car set of PS-2 covered hoppers is the 2008 Convention car offer. Limit: two sets per member.

The Susquehanna car will include the classic rendering of the “Susie Q” character never before presented on a hopper car. This pair will appeal to Susie Q and Canadian model railroaders, niche collectors seeking rolling stock of northeastern regional railroads,

and collectors of LCCA Convention cars. This production run will be limited and will include these quality features:

- produced by Lionel® exclusively for LCCA
- die-cast fully sprung trucks with rotating roller bearing caps; truck sideframes are painted to match the cars
- roof hatches actually open and close
- crisp graphics with SUSIE Q and ONR décor
- added-on (not molded-in) ladders and brake wheels
- detailed undercarriage
- discrete LCCA 2008 Convention designation on the underside.

Order Form for “Susie Q” and ONR Cars

Once submitted, LCCA will consider this a firm, non-refundable order. Deadline for ordering: June 30, 2008.
 Note: UPS cannot deliver to a post office box. A street address is required.

Name: _____ LCCA No.: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip + 4: _____
 Phone: (____) _____ e-mail: _____

Check this box if any part of your address is new.

2008 LCCA Convention Car

- “Susie Q” & ONR PS-2 covered hoppers
 1 set \$129.90, 2 sets \$259.80 \$ _____ (S&H&I included)
 Extended S&H&I outside cont. U.S. \$ _____ \$19 per set
 Illinois residents only, apply 7% sales tax \$ _____ \$9.09 per set

Total: (in U.S. funds) \$ _____

Do the Math:

- Payment Plan A:** My check for the full amount is enclosed made payable to “LCCA” with “TLR/2008CC” written on the memo line.
 Payment Plan B: Bill my credit card for the full amount.
 Payment Plan C: Bill my credit card in 2 equal installments; 1st installment due now; 2nd installment due 6/30/2008.
There will be absolutely no refunds of any payments if you subsequently decide not to complete this purchase.
 No.: _____ Expiration: _____
 Disc MasterCard Visa Code: _____
The 3 digits at the signature panel on back of your card

Sig: _____
 By my signature, I authorize LCCA to charge my account for the amount shown according to the terms and conditions cited herein.

This form may be photocopied. Mail it with your check enclosed to the best toy train club on the planet:
LCCA Business Office • Dept TLR/2008CC • P.O. Box 479 • LaSalle, IL 61301-0479
 For additional information, visit our website: www.lionelcollectors.org

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

Business office services are limited to providing or processing changes of address, changes of phone number, "make good" copies of *The Lion Roars*, applications for membership, replacement membership cards, reinstatements, death notices, Convention registration, and orders for club collectibles.

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People to Contact

- Business Office* - Their role is limited to routine services.
- Secretary* - Inquiries about membership lapses and administrative support.
- Membership Chair* - Joining LCCA and membership questions.
- Immediate Past President* - Complaint against another member.
- President* - Always available and as a last resort.

The LCCA is not affiliated with Lionel or Lionel L.L.C. Opinions and comments made in by-lined columns in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Board of Directors or the views of officers and appointed officials; nor do they indicate a club endorsement of any products mentioned.



The President's Report

by Richard H. Johnson
RM 7103

This fall began with the sad news of the passing, on October 16, of a devoted LCCA member — Al Otten (HC 429). Al served this club for 31 years in numerous elected positions from 1973 until 2003.



His unique leadership and service was recognized by the Board of Directors at its September 29, 2007, meeting when he was named, by acclamation, “Chairman Emeritus” of LCCA. The club extends its sympathy to Al’s family and offers special thanks to his wife, Fran, for sharing Al with us for those many years.

Halloween came and went as did Thanksgiving. My, does time fly! Our traditional December train show in Naperville, Illinois, was held on December 1 to the delight of train buffs both young and old. Our thanks again go to Len Hopkins and his elves for making this special event happen for its 13th consecutive year.

By the time you read this, Christmas will be just around the corner. I hope Santa brings you a toy train item you weren’t expecting.

As the year draws to a close, LCCA has much to be thankful for. We’ve had tremendous member support for all of our projects. We are planning on obtaining member input on a number of issues in the near future, so please share your thoughts with us then so LCCA can continue to be the best toy train club on the planet.

Once again LCCA is taking to the road during the 2007-08 season to share our brand of trains and fun at the World’s Greatest Hobby on Tour shows. We’ll have a booth adjacent to Lionel, sign up new members, visit with attendees, and raise awareness of the toy train hobby and our Club. If you’re at an upcoming show, drop by and say “Hi!”

Sacramento, CA — January 5 & 6, 2008
San Diego, CA — January 12 & 13, 2008
Norfolk - Hampton, VA — February 16 & 17, 2008
Kansas City, MO — March 15 & 16, 2008
Louisville, KY — June 28 & 29, 2008

For those of you who purchase club products and/or attend our Conventions, we are presenting a new feature in *The Lion Roars* to keep you posted on the latest news about club-sponsored product development, delivery dates, and Convention happenings. Please refer to page 13 of this issue for the first article in this ongoing series.

Next spring we will be electing a new Secretary and three Directors at Large, all of whom will serve a two-year term. If you would like to run for one of these positions, please contact Nominating Committee Chairman John Fisher. Now is the time to be thinking about how you can best serve your club. In addition to these elective positions, we are also looking to fill certain appointed positions. Most of our current officers and Directors “learned the ropes” in appointed positions before becoming elected officials. If there is some position for which you feel uniquely qualified, please contact me and let’s discuss it!

On next year’s ballot, there will also be a number of minor constitutional changes that will allow our Constitution to be updated to reflect the methods which we have found to be effective in successfully running a 21st century train club. We’d appreciate your support in getting these changes passed.

I’d like to conclude this brief report by wishing all of you the happiest of holidays as well as a happy and healthy new year. During 2008, let’s do our best to promote the fellowship and fun associated with owning Lionel® trains. 🚂



Happy Holidays
from the Best Toy Train Club on the Planet

LCCA Board Minutes

by Bob Carter
RM 6620

LCCA Board of Directors Meeting
Saturday, September 29, 2007
Springhill Suites O'Hare, Chicago, IL

The meeting was called to order by President Johnson at 8:10 a.m. Present were President Johnson, Immediate Past President Caponi, President-elect Kolis, Treasurer DeVito, Secretary Carter, and Directors Calkins, Ellingson, Fogg, Gambino and Ourso. Guests in attendance were Constitution Chairman Findley, Convention Co-Manager Fisher, *TLR* & Website Editor Mottler, and *IT* Editor Tribuzi.

A motion by Director Ourso, seconded by Director Calkins, to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2007 Board meeting in Chicago, Illinois, was approved.

CONVENTIONS

Convention Co-Manager Fisher reported that the Chicago convention was successful in all respects, and that planning is already under way for next year. The Convention Team will be leaving for Buffalo on October 11 to finalize all details with the Adam's Mark, our host hotel, and all tour arrangements. It was again stressed for Buffalo attendees to **GET YOUR PASSPORT!**

In 2009, we will be going to Sacramento, California, where our host hotel will be the Radisson Hotel Sacramento. It is a resort property built around a large lake, and we will utilize the entire facility. There are lots of exciting tours possible in the area with one of the best (if not THE BEST) railroad museums in the country right there in Sacramento: the California Railroad Museum. This will be a Convention that our members will really enjoy.

In 2010, we are again looking at Denver, with another wonderful UP excursion. The Convention Team hopes to have a hotel contract signed by the end of this year. The Union Pacific steam crew is already looking forward to our return to Denver.

For 2011, the Convention location is expected to be east of the Mississippi River. Several sites are being considered.

PRODUCT UPDATES

IPP Caponi provided some product updates. The General Set add-on box replacement inserts have been mailed, and the replacement cannon cars (with the cannons permanently affixed to the chassis) have been accepted by LCCA. The replacement cannon cars will be mailed by mid-October. Questions about the wrap-up of the General Set add-on car offering should be directed to IPP Caponi.

The 2008 PS-2 covered hopper Convention Car pair will be sold as a set for \$129.90. These colorful cars will be first

pictured in the October issue of *TLR* and then on the website. The deadline for ordering these cars is June 30, 2008, with delivery by December 31, 2008.

The New Haven #209 passenger car color, individual car boxes, and set box have been approved. The engine boxes will have the flaps taped on one end and Velcro fasteners on the other end. IPP Caponi does not yet have a sample of the add-on packaging. It appears that the set will be here by year's end with the add-ons arriving a few weeks later. The add-ons are being produced at the same time as the set so the paint on all units will be an exact match.

Future items have been designed and submitted to Lionel for price quotes. More on these items will be reported as additional information becomes available. Additional clothing items are being considered such as baseball caps, visors, and club patches.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

President Johnson presented a report from Larry Black regarding the newly redesigned membership cards, renewal letters and "welcome letter" to new members. We should be seeing these in November.

TLR & WEBSITE

Editor Mottler reported that the October issue of *The Lion Roars* will be in the mail by October 15. Mike thanked all the Convention photographers for their contributions. All of their pictures are now stored on a computer for later use.

INTERCHANGE TRACK & eTRACK

Editor Tribuzi reviewed the report of a committee comprised of himself, Larry Black, and Greg Elder regarding member usage of the *IT*, including its value as a price guide. Four publication options were presented to the Board. Option 1: Eliminate the September issue, the least used issue. Option 2: Eliminate the July issue, the second least used issue. Option 3: Eliminate two issues and revamp the whole *IT* publication schedule to January, April, July and October. Option 4: Don't change anything. The committee recommended that the Board adopt Option 3. A discussion was held regarding the four options and educating members on how to best use this publication. Director Ourso made a motion to leave the *IT* "as is" (Option 4) which was seconded by Director Gambino. The motion passed 4-3. It was suggested that the club conduct a survey to see what club members actually desire. Volunteers to work on this project included Calkins, Fogg, Gambino, Kolis, and Tribuzi.

A break was called at 10:30 a.m.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The meeting resumed at 10:42 a.m. with Secretary Carter stating that our membership remains fairly constant at about 8,000 members. He mentioned that we had received a nice card from Lenny Dean's family expressing their thanks for our expression of sympathy over Lenny's death.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer DeVito reported that the club is solvent, with all bills paid and a sufficient cash reserve in the bank.

Continued on page 6

Hog Wild for the Hogwarts Express

by Erol Gurcan
RM 26800

A Review: Harry Potter Hogwarts Express Train Set

Lionel's Harry Potter Hogwarts Express Train Set has been one of the most anticipated O-gauge train sets this year. Moreover, the fact that it is on the cover of Lionel's current catalog establishes its significance to the company's success. The set arrived at hobby and retail stores last month, just in time for the holiday season.

LCCA members first learned about and saw a drawing of the Harry Potter Train in my December 2006 *TLR* interview with Lionel® CEO and President Jerry Calabrese. In that article, Mr. Calabrese stated he hoped the set would become the natural successor to the Polar Express Train set (6-31960) which remains for sale three years after it was first released.



1

Since both the Hogwarts Express and Polar Express sets are recently licensed fantasy trains designed to bring new persons into the hobby and both currently retail for \$300, comparisons between the two are inevitable and will be made in this review.

What's Included in the Set

The HP set comes with a metal die-cast 4-6-0 European-style locomotive with headlight and two traction tires, plastic tender with coal load, and three 15-inch passenger cars with interior lighting. It also contains the good looking CW-80 watt transformer (which is included in most Lionel starter sets) and 40x60-inch oval of FasTrack™ with O36 curves, which is the minimum radius for this train. The locomotive, tender, and passenger cars are not individually boxed,

unlike the Polar Express. It also comes with an extra set of traction tires and several replacement light bulbs, a benefit not advertised in Lionel's catalog.

Nice Level of Detail

The locomotive is mostly rust or light brown color, with a flat black smoke box and cab roof (see **photo 1**). I expected the locomotive's color to be red because of its appearance on the cover of the current catalog. Details also include rivets on the smoke box and cab roof. A handrail runs down both sides of the loco. The front end bears number 5972 and states "Hogwarts Express," both in gold color paint (see **photo 2**). Part of the cab window has glass, a nice



2



3

touch.

There are also cast in details inside the cab. (see **photo 3**). However, the locomotive cab does not have either an engineer or fireman figures. Neither did the PE set, but that set came with four separate play action figures, something not available in the HP set. I especially liked the spoked drive wheels. Overall, the locomotive has a nice level of detail for a set costing only \$300.

The plastic tender also has rivets, metal spoked wheels and states "Hogwarts Railways" in gold lettering with emblem (see **photo 4**). It also has a nice coal load that is realistic looking although it is plastic (see **photo 5**).

The passenger cars weigh very little. There are no silhouettes in the windows, something which is offered in the PE set (see **photo 6**). However, each HP passenger car has a diaphragm at both ends; these are not offered on the PE passenger cars. There is a large gap between the bottom of the car and its trucks.

On the Test Track – A Smooth Runner

In order to be able to write a more comprehensive review, I tested three different Hogwarts sets to varying degrees; I was able to run one train set at a Lionel day event for four hours straight at 13 volts, only stopping it to add smoke fluid. This loco, its tender and cars ran flawlessly during that period of time. I was also able to run one of the preview Hogwarts sets that Lionel sent in September to its



40 largest dealers, including Nassau Hobbies in Freeport, New York. I had the opportunity to run this set in forward and reverse for a short period with the smoke unit on. It too ran very well without any problems.

The third set observed for this review was sent to me directly from Lionel, and is the one that received the most extensive testing. After pulling the locomotive out of its Styrofoam packaging and placing it on the track, the front two wheel flanges of the four wheel front truck did not make contact with the track. The locomotive derailed around curves. I was able to quickly correct this problem by slightly bending the front two wheels on the front truck downward. After that, the front wheel flanges made contact with the track and never derailed. I suspected that the tight Styrofoam compartment holding the locomotive in place was the culprit and caused the front truck to move upward when taken in and out of the box. Purchasers of this set who want to avoid having this problem happen to them can cut the Styrofoam underneath the front truck and create a little more space for the locomotive. Like all new locomotives, it needed lubrication in order to run correctly.

The set provided by Lionel was tested on FasTrack with the O36 curves supplied for this set. I also used an MTH® Z-4000™ transformer and a Lionel CW-80, the transformer provided with it. The locomotive ran smoothly with both transformers. The CW-80 had more than enough power to run the locomotive, tender, and several more cars than come with the set.

I also ran the locomotive, tender, and three passenger cars thorough Atlas® 21st Century™ track with a variety of

switches with different radii. It ran smoothly and perfectly in both forward and reverse and up and down the grades, without stalling or derailed. The speed of the train did change when going up or down hills, but this is to be expected from a locomotive that does not have speed control. The locomotive was dead quiet in neutral. No unusual noises were noted.

I also attached three more lighted passenger cars similar in length and weight to the three cars that came with the set. I did this to see if the locomotive was capable of pulling all six at the same time. My reason was, if the set turns out to be a marketing success for Lionel, I expect they would make several add on cars as was done with the Polar Express set. The locomotive had no problem pulling six cars on FasTrack, through Atlas O switches, and up and down grades. No derailments or stalling occurred.

The locomotive has no momentum flywheel as best as I could tell, and Lionel's current catalog does not state one is offered. When tested in forward with both three and six passenger cars in tow, the locomotive sometimes made a semi-gradual stop, and sometimes came to an abrupt stop. It also stopped abruptly in reverse, but not to the point of shaking the passenger cars. I would like to have seen a momentum flywheel offered as part of the set.

When I first saw the current Lionel catalog and read about the features of this train set, the thing I found most odd was the minimal track radius for the train set — O36. Since the locomotive and tender are not scale in size, most would think the train should be able to negotiate O31, or even O27 curves, like the Polar Express loco and tender. For curiosity's sake, I ran the locomotive and tender on my O31 Lionel tubular track. Sure enough, the front truck derailed several times when going around the curves. However, the passenger cars negotiated the O31 curves OK – should you decide to run them with other locomotives.

Sounds and Smoke

The tender features the Lionel air whistle common to other train sets including the PE set, the Pennsylvania Flyer Set (6-30018), and others. In other words, no bell, Railsounds™, or Trainsounds is offered. At a minimum, the set should also have a bell since most locomotives today offered by Lionel's competitors have it. The air whistle was sufficiently loud when the loco was both moving and in neutral. There is no whistle volume adjustment on the tender.

Smoke output when pulling the set's three cars at a moderate speed at 11-12 volts on the Z-4000 was good, with occasional nice round puffs of smoke. The two other locomotives tested for this review also smoked similarly. The fact that the smoke stack for this locomotive was wider than the typical Lionel steam locomotive, gave the perception of greater smoke volume. Smoke output was very good when the locomotive was pulling six cars at 13-14 volts. The locomotive does not smoke in neutral, normal for this locomotive according to the instruction booklet. The smoke on-off button (as well as directional button) is located inside the locomotive's cab, a good location so the train does not need to be taken off the track to switch the setting.

The instruction booklet states to add four drops at first and four more when smoke output decreases. I added 10-12 drops the first time and 8-10 when smoke output decreased. Personally, I don't see how a smoke unit can perform adequately on just four drops of smoke fluid.

Conclusion

Overall, this is a nice set for the money. Even though I know little about the Harry Potter phenomenon, the set grew on me the more I ran it. Its strengths – a smooth-running and durable locomotive with a reasonable amount of detail and a nicely detailed tender and coal load. However, I would have liked a momentum flywheel as part of the loco. I also expected more weight to each of the passenger cars.

If Lionel's goal was to offer a well-built fantasy train designed to bring new people into the hobby and also create some excitement among hobbyists, then it has already succeeded the same way it did with the Polar Express set three years ago. Only time will tell if the HP set sells well. Let's hope that it does.

Lionel CEO Jerry Calabrese and Vice President of Marketing Mark Erickson provided an HP set so a timely review could be written for this issue of *TLR* at the holiday season. Thanks, gentlemen! I returned the set to Lionel following the completion of testing.

Secondly, I would like to thank Lionel's Events Manager Tom Nuzzo for letting me run a HP train at a "Lionel Day" event at Tom's Trains in Ardsley, New York. Mr. Nuzzo is responsible for scheduling Lionel Day events and maintaining the Lionel layouts you see at Christmas time. I would also like to thank my friend and fellow LCCA member Charlie Hirschberg (RM 237), owner of Nassau Hobby in Freeport, New York, 516-378-9594 (www.nassauhobby.com) for allowing me to test the Hogwarts Express preview set provided to them. Thanks also to Eliot Scher for allowing me to do some of the testing on his layout. 

Photographs by Eliot Scher

Continued from page 3

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

President Johnson presented his recommended changes to the Constitution which fell into four categories: (1) clarifying and correcting existing sections to reflect their intent and/or the way the club currently operates; (2) permitting the annual ballot to be mailed earlier so the election results would be known sooner; (3) creating a new class of membership called "Junior Members" to allow persons under the age of 18 to be members of LCCA; and (4) allowing the President-elect to be a voting member of the Board and delete a Director at Large for a continued total of seven voting Board members. Discussion ensued about the advantages/disadvantages of keeping the board at seven members versus enlarging the Board to nine members by adding another director and the President-elect.

Break for lunch at 11:56 a.m.

Resumed meeting at 1:32 p.m.

Discussion continued on all recommended constitutional changes.

Director Fogg moved, and Director Ellingson seconded, to accept all changes as proposed. The motion passed with one objection.

Three options were discussed regarding implementation of the changes. Option 1: vote on them in a special election; Option 2: place them on next year's annual ballot; or Option 3: leave the matter to the discretion of the President. A motion was made by Director Ourso, seconded by IPP Caponi, to give the President the authority to call a special election between now and the first of the year. The motion passed.

Director Calkins then moved that all directors and the Secretary be allowed to succeed themselves for one additional term (limit of two consecutive terms) because the current one term rule doesn't permit the club to avail itself

of the experience gained by an official during his/her initial term of office. The motion was seconded by Director Ourso, and passed. This proposed amendment will also appear on the next ballot.

BYLAWS CHANGE

Next, there was a discussion on whether train meet attendance fees should be charged to LCCA members. Both Bill Stitt and Larry Black felt that meet hosts needed to have the flexibility to charge LCCA members an admission fee because of rising expenses. IPP Caponi moved that LCCA amend its ABL #1 to permit members to be charged an admission fee to train meets. Director Calkins seconded, and the motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Director Ourso moved that we name Albert F. Otten "Chairman Emeritus of LCCA" as a tribute to his 28 years of elected service to the club. The motion was seconded by Director Gambino and passed by acclamation.

The Board went into executive session at 2:25 p.m. upon motion by Director Fogg, seconded by Director Gambino. The Board came out of executive session at 2:38 p.m. upon motion by Director Gambino, seconded by Director Calkins.

It was noted that Director Ourso has developed a complete listing of sets, locos, cars, etc. from all manufacturers which could be made available on eTrack with pictures. It was suggested that an article be written for publication in *TLR* with the possibility of creating a CD containing this data for use by members.

The next Board meeting will be held the weekend of March 28-30, 2008, at a site to be named at a later date.

The meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Director Fogg, seconded by Director Gambino, at 3:58 p.m. 

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Carter, Secretary

Building the Yardley & Western Railroad

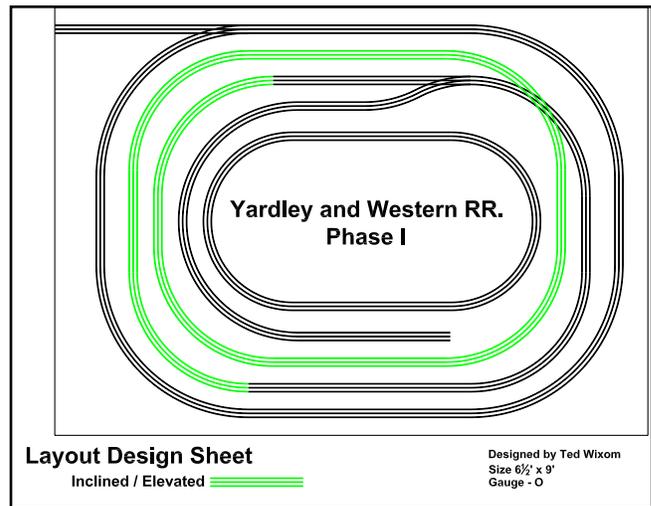
by Theodore Wixom
RM 13157

Phase I: An Intermediate Step for Alec

I have collected and operated toy trains for more than 35 years. As with many people my age, I was lucky. I received several postwar Lionel constitutional trains when I was young. Fortunately, my family kept them, and those trains became the foundation of my current collection.

Like many others in our hobby, I am concerned that we don't have enough young people joining our ranks. To interest all of my grandchildren in our hobby, I constructed a small 4x6-foot train layout for each family group. Decorated with a winter theme and with space included for the Christmas tree, the layouts are for use during the holidays and hopefully throughout the year.

One grandson, eight-year-old Alec Nunziato, and his father, John, showed a growing interest in toy trains. They allocated one of the spare rooms in their new house for use as a train room year-round. They installed shelves on three sides of the room and displayed their growing collection of toy trains. They moved the tiny 4x6-foot layout into the center of the room, but it was obvious that we needed to replace this small layout ASAP to maintain Alec's interest in trains. A small layout with trains running around and around was no match for the lure of the cool video games available to Alec and his friends. The new train room would accommodate a 6-1/2x9-foot walk-around layout with a three-foot-wide aisle around it for access to the shelves.



I blocked out two-and-one-half weeks on my travel schedule for completing the job without using any components from their old layout, since I promised to give that layout to another youngster in my neighborhood. By extensive pre-planning, I brought all the components with me to complete the job and avoided a waiting period for a part required for finishing the job.

The Track Plan for Phase I

My main objective was to build a layout similar to the layouts that Lionel made for their dealers in the 1950s and 60s. I planned for many trains running at one time with lots of action. I wanted to showcase the trains and accessories and installed a minimum of landscaping and switches. We designed a track plan to allow three trains to be run at one time with a fourth train waiting on a siding. See **Figure 1**.

I wanted the tracks to have long runs with curvatures as large in diameter as possible to accommodate larger engines





The coal yard is dominated by the Lionel Coal Spreader. The homemade chain-link fence keeps the loose coal from spreading onto the layout.

in the future. We installed O54 curves on the outer loop and O42 curves on the first inside loop. To make the track plan more interesting, we created the first inside loop with an over-under, doubled-back oval; this doubled the length of the run of the track. The upper loop crossed over the lower track on a curved section that required a curved bridge. I built it using a curved sheet metal base with old plastic Lionel girder bridge sections attached to the sides for a bit of realism.

To improve the realism of the layout and maximize its future flexibility, we used MTH® RealTrax™. In my opinion it is the closest match to Lionel's Super-O track. We reduced the track noise of the plastic roadbed by laying it on Dow® Sill Seal™. RealTrax is designed to make it easy to set up the block sections and insulated rail sections that I wanted throughout the layout. I bent back the contacts on the rail of the sections to be blocked and glued a thin piece of plastic between the contacts and the rails to ensure the rails or contacts didn't touch.

I set up four blocked sections on the over/under inner loop to make it easy for a new operator to stop a train just before the siding track switch, move the other train out from the siding and up to the upper loop, shut the train off on the upper loop and reactivate the block section behind the switch to move the other train forward and then back into the siding track to be shut off. We used the MTH RealTrax lighted lock-ons on all block sections so the young operators would see which sections were powered ON.

Our long-range plan was to start simple and – as Alec grows older – redesign the original track plan to incorporate more switches and build-in more complexity to



Two lashed-up Burlington GP9s wait on the lower loop while an Atlantic Coast Line passenger Auto Train passes on the upper loop on its way to Florida.

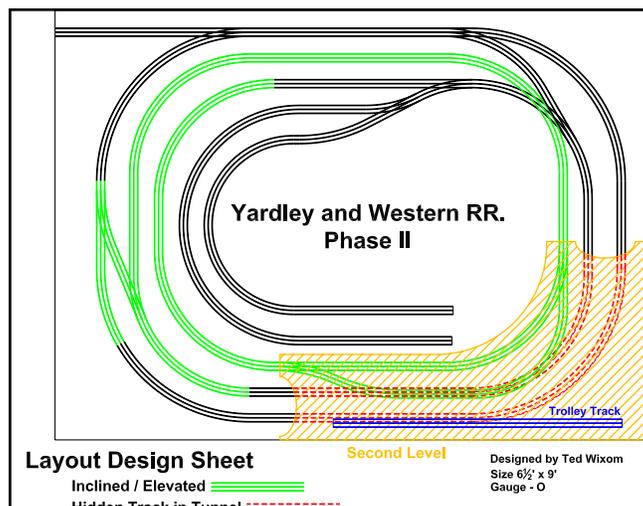


The lady driver of the Mercedes ragtop receives a speeding ticket from a cop as Harry Potter looks on from the front entrance of Independence Hall.

the existing bench work. The Phase II track plan is shown as **Figure 2** for reference.

Designing Scenery for Future Expansion

We kept the scenery simple because of the amount of track on the layout and our intention to redesign to Phase II in a couple of years. We painted the bench work green and glued “Busch” brand grass on the entire layout before we attached the track in order to give the track more insulation. Busch grass is manufactured in Germany and is covered with





The NYC Hudson steamer crosses the underpass road on the Yardley town square. Spiderman remains vigilant from a vantage point atop the Lionel Operating Control Tower.



Alec Nunziato and his dad, John, at the controls of their new layout.



The Spookiest House on the Block by K-Line is located across the tracks. It's decorated for Halloween in expectation of visitations by trick or treaters.



Superman, Woody, Roadrunner, Captain Hook, Spiderman, and Scooby Doo wait for the next train at the Plasticville Station in Yardley.

tiny green hairs that don't shed; it looks exactly like grass. This brand is the most realistic grass that I have ever seen; it provides a good basic covering. It is durable, and we will use it in Phase II when we relocate some of the track. Roads were cardboard blacktop made by Leisure Time Products®. We stapled the roadways to the grass so that it would be easy to relocate them in Phase II. We painted the staples with flat black paint to mask their appearance.

Station platforms were made from layers of black rubber foam sheets. The Yardley town square has a Plasticville Train Station, Plasticville Independence Hall, and the K-Line "Spookiest House on the Block" accessory. Three vacant lots remained on the town square; they will be filled-in with other buildings later this year. The chain-link fence around the Operating Coaling Station yard area was made of metal screen wire with 2-½-inch finishing nails as posts. This containment keeps the coal from spreading all over the layout. Most of the trees on the layout were crude, but they will be replaced by the end of the year with more realistic ones.

A Fanciful Population

Besides the normal O-gauge people available in a hobby shop, the Yardley & Western has a number of cartoon characters populating the layout to maintain the interest of Alec and his eight-year-old buddies. During the past 10 years when I traveled as a corporate troubleshooter for my company, I found a number of popular cartoon characters – nearly in scale to the average O-gauge person – in hobby shops, toy stores, candy stores, and vending machines.

Accessories Keep the Action Going

Our goal was to fit in as many action accessories as possible in order to compete for the attention of kids who are accustomed to playing action-driven video games. We installed the following accessories:

- Curved Styrofoam Tunnel
- K-Line Spookiest House on the Block #K-42432
- K-Line Bubbling Water Tower #K-131
- K-Line Operating Watchman's Shanty #K- 42410
- Lionel Animated Maiden Rescue #32919
- Lionel Operating Control Tower #12702
- Lionel Operating Coaling Station #2315

Lionel Operating Milk Car & Platform
 Lionel Cop and Hobo Boxcars and Platforms (2)
 Lionel Rotary Airport Beacon #12966
 Lionel Operating Carousel #34190
 Lionel Conveyor Lumber Loader #364
 Marx Searchlight Tower
 MTH Operating American Waving Flag
 MTH O-Scale Flashing Crossing Signals
 Plasticville Independence Hall, Illuminated
 Plasticville Suburban Stations, Illuminated (2)
 Plasticville Station Platform, Illuminated.

Extra Power for Future Expansion

We used two Lionel rebuilt ZW Transformers to power the layout with Lionel #14077 Amp and Voltmeters and Lionel #5906 Sound Activation (bell) Buttons. Each

power segment from each transformer was connected to a separate terminal block for simplicity in wiring multiple track blocks and accessories. We provided extra connections to make the next phase of expansion easy.

Phase II: Future Expansion in Two Years

Our long-range plan is to make the layout design more complex as Alec matures. We plan to make the changes illustrated on the Phase II track plan in two years by adding seven more switches and constructing a second level and tunnel at one end of the layout. Scenery will be more detailed with rock formations, realistic vegetation and life-like trees. Trains will be able to switch back and forth between all operating tracks, and we will install a complete Lionel TrainMaster Command Control™ system.

Track power connections will be hidden by adding RealTrax ground track sections.

Summary

Thanks to the efforts of the entire family, we completed the Yardley & Western Railroad on time during my two-and-one-half week visit. The cost of the layout was more expensive since we used new components; except for the two ZWs and the #364 Log Loader. However, the time spent in building the layout with Alec and my son-in-law, John, was priceless. 🎁

Photographs by Carol Wixom and John Nunziato



Senior layout construction engineer (and grandpa) Theodore Wixom.

Toy Trunk Railroad

by Erik Sansom



Christmas Comes Early for the Son of a Toy Buyer

by Mike McLintock
RM 27393

Those wonderful orange and blue boxes appeared under the Christmas tree every year. Even at age six I knew that color combination meant Lionel® trains! Because I was a son of the toy buyer at a large retail department store, I considered the store's toy department as my personal toy box. I was the first kid in town with the newest toys BEFORE they were presented on the shelves of the toy department in the local store. That was one sweet deal!

Toys at Work and for Play

My father, Addison McLintock, knew how to make Christmas special. As a toy buyer for Robeson's department store in Champaign, Illinois, and later Bergner's in Peoria, Illinois, he knew that Christmas was his time to shine.

While my mother took care of the pajamas-and-socks gift categories, my father was always in charge of selecting the toys during my growing-up years in the 1950s. He took that responsibility seriously, and I was the beneficiary of his dedication to toys and family life.

I loved watching freight trains cross flat Illinois farmscapes and seeing Illinois Central passenger trains, including the famed "City of New Orleans" streamliner, pull into the depot at Champaign/Urbana. My father knew he had a Lionel train lover from day one. I was six years old when the first orange and blue boxes beckoned to me from under a somewhat scrawny pine tree heavily laden with silver tinsel. Thanks to a Santa Fe F3 warbonnet diesel engine on point and a set of three passenger cars – which are still running on my layout today – I got hooked on the hobby for a lifetime.

Annual Gift Cycles

Every year for Christmas and my birthday, I could count on a new and exciting gift by Lionel under the tree or by the cake. I knew what the possibilities were because I made it my business to memorize what was new on the Lionel shelves in the store's toy department as well as in the Lionel catalogs he brought home. While other kids may have visited

their dad's office and twirled in his office chair or pounded on his typewriter, at my dad's "office" I was allowed to run the store's Lionel pre-Christmas train layouts while other kids watched in amazement and probably some envy.

Christmas wasn't the only time of year when toy excitement built at the McLintock household. January meant Toy Fair in New York City. In the 1950s my father traveled there by train; boarding the Illinois Central for Chicago and



It's Christmas morning of 1953, and I opened the orange and blue Lionel boxes and placed the trains on the track. My brother, Mark, is busy exploring other toys. Yes, that is a Joe Palooka punching bag near the tree.

then connecting to an eastbound train for the trip to NYC. The image of that long brown train with an orange stripe and the famous green diamond on its nose was burned into my memory.

He returned from those buying trips with next year's new Christmas toys in his suitcase. My brother Mark and I were the first kids in town to have a stringless yo-yo and a hula-hoop.

LCCA Product Development Shop

by Lou Caponi
RM 8735

Welcome to the first LCCA Product Development Shop column. There'll be more to follow so that you can be up to date with the latest news regarding the status of our highly sought-after line of club-sponsored collectibles.

Latest Sales Specials

On pages 30 - 32 of this issue of *TLR*, you'll find descriptions, photos, and an order form for four unique items. We have paired two On-site Convention Cars and two fun-to-watch-and-run operating cars at attractive package prices. Check out these items, but don't procrastinate – the quantities are extremely limited and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis with a limit of one pair of cars per member. Because of limited availability, these four items won't be listed on the club's website. Use the printed order form or a photocopy to mail your order to the LCCA Business Office or fax it to 815-223-0791.

2008 Convention Car, Buffalo-Niagara NY

Check out the ad on the inside front cover for our great-looking PS-2 covered hopper 2008 Convention Car set; one with ONR décor and the other in the Susquehanna road name with its Susie Q cartoon character displayed on both sides. These colorful cars have all the new second-generation Lionel® detailing right down to the painted roller bearing die-cast sprung trucks. This is the first time the club has offered a PS-2 style car. Don't wait, order your pair today!

2007 Convention Car, Chicago IL

LCCA received an outstanding response to the CN&W modern tank car offer, our 2007 Convention Car. This car would look great in any freight consist and be a wonderful match for Lionel's new heritage fleet UP / C&NW SD-70ACe locomotive coming to the marketplace soon.

According to Lionel, the projected delivery date of this car to the USA will be December 31, 2007. This item has been slightly delayed because of the unique painting process required for manufacturing this car. Believe me, it will be well worth the wait when you see the finished product.

New Haven #209 Passenger Train

Things are moving toward completion of this modern re-make of a 1958 Lionel passenger train. I recently received a sample passenger car, a rolling stock box, and the B unit for final approval prior to manufacturing. Lionel is doing a fine job for us. My first reaction was "Wow!" LCCA has created something special for the set box for this train. In 1958, the original set box (like most set boxes of that era) came with the flaps glued shut. The LCCA NH #209 set box will contain Velcro strips on the upper flaps to avoid tearing that precious cardboard. We intend to do something similar with the locomotive box and the add-on car boxes too!

If you ordered this train and the three add-on cars, I assure you that you won't be disappointed. The set is scheduled to hit USA shores on December 31, 2007 along with the B unit and two extra cars – providing there are no production delays or interruptions by intervention of Murphy's Law. Heads up – we will ship the set to recipients first; then the three add-on cars will follow two weeks later to avoid confusion.

That Strange Piece of Cardboard

Everyone who ordered the Halloween General Add-on Cars should also have received a large piece of cardboard from Lionel. Many of you had no idea what it was. LCCA didn't know that the shippers did not place a descriptive note on the outside of the shipping box to explain the contents inside; for this we apologize. However, in several "President's Reports" published in *TLR*, I mentioned that recipients would receive a replacement cardboard box insert for use in holding the three car boxes in place within the set box. All original cardboard box inserts were bad – the openings were cut too small. **DON'T THROW AWAY THIS NEW CARBOARD INSERT**; it's a perfect fit for the three car boxes within the set box.

Replacement Cannon Car

Members – and ONLY those members – who REPORTED their damaged Cannon Cars during the 3-1/2 month reporting period will receive replacement Cannon Cars. **IF YOU REPORTED A DAMAGED CANNON CAR BUT HAVE NOT RECEIVED A REPLACEMENT CAR**, please contact me by e-mail at: caponi@comcast.net. I will check my list to be certain nothing was lost in transit.

What To Do with Your Damaged Cannon Car

Keep it. Do not return it to Lionel or LCCA. You can't purchase replacement parts for the damaged Cannon Car because there aren't any. Leftover parts from the original manufacturing run were discarded. Please do not call the factory or contact LCCA.

Previews of Coming Attractions

In the next issue of *TLR*, I'll present more club product updates plus a preview of some new and exciting offers produced by Lionel LLC exclusively for the LCCA. Happy Railroading! 

Lou Caponi is a Past President of the club and the long-time Chairman of Product Development.

Answers to Lionel Puzzlement:

1. Scissors, 2. Bench, 3. Airbrush, 4. Razor, 5. Acetate, 6. Pencil, 7. Bashing, 8. Bass, 9. Brush, 10. Knife, 11. Ruler, 12. Card, 13. Drill, 14. Paint, 15. Glue, 16. Scratchbuilding.

Convention Update

by John Fisher RM 6541
and Eric Fogg RM 12768
Convention Managers

A New Newsy Feature

Beginning with this issue, these updates will become an ongoing feature in *The Lion Roars*. We'll provide information you can use in your planning through ongoing reports from your volunteer Convention committee. The mission of this team is clear and unwavering:

To provide LCCA members and their families with the best organized, best run, most fun, best value, family-oriented annual conventions in great hotels, with very attractive rates, in interesting cities – period! Our relentless pursuit of this goal is totally designed so you may experience the best toy train Convention on the planet.



Buffalo in 2008

When we tell you, “You’re really going to like Buffalo,” believe it. By the time you show up at the Convention next July, your team will have been planning the event for more than two years, including four trips to western New York state in the space of 21 months.

We arrived on our first trip at the beginning of the worst blizzard in Buffalo’s history in October 2006. The staff kept the Adam’s Mark Hotel open, but it wasn’t easy with no food deliveries and a skeleton crew. Every meal was a buffet. But we saw them work under pressure and they are good, very good.

Spending time indoors, we got to know the hotel layout very well. The Trading Hall is easy in and out, and the locations for the Club Store and the train layout can’t be beat. Plus there are lots of places to just sit and visit with old and new friends.

When cabin fever set in, we did some walking. Our hotel’s right downtown, close to Lake Erie, great restaurants, and the new marine museum. We even rode the light rail system. You’ll like both this historic city and this super hotel.

When we visited in May we checked out the Medina Railroad. It was Thomas the Tank Engine Weekend, so we saw them work under pressure too. They’ll be able to handle us easily. And we visited Niagara Falls. What a sight!

In May, we also visited some of our local members and got their input. Around dinnertime we offered to buy, and they suggested pizza from their favorite place. Each slice must have had a pound of pepperoni on it. We had to hold it with two hands; there’s no way we could have eaten more than one piece! The citizens of Buffalo – especially our members – are excited to have you come to the Convention.

They’re warm, friendly people, proud of their city and eager to show it off. You’ll like the food – including the chicken wings – and you’ll like the people.

Excursion Train Ride

We returned to Buffalo in October, 2007; no snow this time! Our tour company had a well-planned, thoughtful list that will ensure you see all the best places in western New York. We drove out to the Finger Lakes Scenic Railroad to see for ourselves. Those nice folks run historic NYC equipment on as scenic a railroad as you could ask for. **Hint: This tour will sell out quickly.** You’ll like the tours.

All the information you need to start planning your Buffalo trip is in this issue. But don’t take too long; things will fill up quickly. When we tell you “You’re really going to like Buffalo” – take our word for it!

Sacramento in 2009

Finally, for those of you who really like to plan ahead, we’ll be looking for you to join us July 19-25, 2009 in Sacramento, California, at the fabulous Radisson Hotel Sacramento. Wait ‘til you see what the Golden State’s capitol city has waiting for LCCA members and their families! 

Shuffle off to Buffalo

for these 2008 LCCA Convention Tours

There's a lot to see and do in western New York! Don't delay in making your selections, as some tours are sure to fill up quickly and tickets are limited.

Tour #1 - Niagara History "On the Rails"
Monday, July 21 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
\$82 per person



Experience the unique and exciting "living history" of Niagara County on the Medina Railroad Museum Train Ride. With historic NYC E units in "lightning stripe" livery on point and stainless steel Budd cars in tow, you'll enjoy the scenic and historic ride from Medina to Lockport (and return) while interacting with costumed characters from Niagara's history. Encounter fugitive slaves and conductors of the famed Underground Railroad and observe ruthless bounty hunters board the train to find them. Learn about Niagara's industrialists and entrepreneurs, Erie Canal workers, farmers, and Civil War heroes – all through interaction and fun during your rail experience. These interactions enable you to learn more about the impact of rail on Niagara County!

Your trip includes ample time at the Medina Railroad Museum with its huge memorabilia and toy train collection, fire fighting collection, and 204-foot-long operating train layout. Also enjoy a delicious barbecue luncheon provided by Keith's Famous Barbecue with all the fixin's.

Tour package includes: luxury motorcoach transportation, visit to Ridge Road Station, full luncheon, admission to the Medina Railroad Museum, scenic round trip rail ride.

Tour #2 - Trains in Erie, PA
Tuesday, July 22 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
\$76 per person



In the 1980s, a group of GE retirees and members of the General Electric Elfun Society initiated a project to accumulate and validate material of historic interest and to interview persons of responsibility and knowledge in the Erie plant operation. The preservation of this history of the GE Erie operation became the Museum of Erie GE History.

The displays feature early Erie plant history, foundry operations, direct current motor, an operating HO gauge model railroad, and more. Be sure to visit the Museum Gift Shop on your way out.

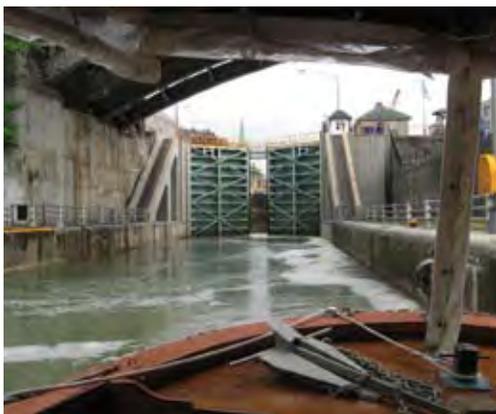
Next, it's off to the MARX Toy Museum featuring wonderful Marx Toys such the famous big wheel, large running train displays, tin toys, and Erie's Famous Mouse House, a 16-room cardboard box mansion built as if mice had gathered things from "downstairs."

The history of trains then continues with lunch at the Concourse of Union Station – a 1927 restored train station. Also visit the Erie Brewing Company and learn how beer is made; of course, there are samples of Erie's finest! Travel time is approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

Tour #3 - "... on the Erie Canal"
Tuesday, July 22 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
\$77 per person

Much remains the same today on the Erie Canal as it was in the 1800s. Hand-dug to connect the Hudson River with the Niagara River, the 363-mile grand old canal is truly a great engineering feat! Enjoy an informative narrated two-hour cruise on this historic waterway and through the Lockport Locks aboard a Coast Guard-inspected vessel. Your trip is followed by a sit-down lunch back at the Lockport Locks and Canal Side Center.

After lunch, board the Lockport Cave & Underground Boat Ride on the Erie Canal for an exciting 70-minute guided tour through America's past. You'll explore the historic Erie Canal Locks 67-71, constructed in 1838. You will also view ruins from an earlier industrial age, walk safely through a water tunnel that was blasted out of solid rock in the 1850s, view stalactites, flow stone, various geological formations and artifacts left behind by the men who built the tunnel in the early days of the Erie Canal. If you are lucky, you may even find a fossil or two.



The next part of your journey is a one-of-a-kind! Embark on America's longest underground boat ride through a trip of wonders. Marvel at artifacts left by miners on the Erie Canal over a century ago and view cave formations in their early stages of development. Visitors are awestruck as they take a ride that has been described as "both peaceful and eerie" as the boat glides through the lifeless water illuminated only by small, sporadically placed electric lights.

Tour #4 - Casino Night Tuesday, July 22 1 – 9 p.m.

\$32 per person

NOTE: This tour is for ADULTS ONLY; must be at least 19 years old. Proper proof of citizenship required when traveling into Canada.

Start by experiencing the Fallsview Casino Resort, an opulent and spacious gaming floor with over 3,000 slot machines and 150 table games. Your dinner buffet at the Casino is included. Visit the Galleria Shops, with a variety of retail boutiques and restaurants located right in the Fallsview.



Right outside the Casino you'll experience the power of the Niagara with an evening self-guided tour of Niagara

Falls. The adjacent streets are filled with museums, souvenir shops, gaming arcades, restaurants, clubs, and tourist attractions of all kinds.

Tour package includes: luxury motorcoach transportation, five-hour visit to the Fallsview Casino Resort, full dinner buffet, and \$10 casino coin voucher per person!

Tour #5 - The Niagara Falls Experience: USA & Canada

Wednesday, July 23 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

\$85 per person

NOTE: Proper proof of citizenship required when traveling into Canada.



The wonders of the world come alive on this fabulous tour featuring both the U.S. and Canadian sides of The Falls. Travel to the U.S. side of the Falls to visit Goat Island and Terrapin Point for a view from the brink of the Upper Niagara River Rapids and American Falls.

Next you're off to the Niagara Reservation State Park and Prospect Point Observation where you will descend in the Niagara Gorge aboard the historic Maid of the Mist for an unforgettable cruise to the base of the Horseshoe Falls. A delightful full luncheon overlooking the Falls with a spectacular view is planned.

Following lunch, we'll enter Canada to visit Table Rock, the floral clock at the Niagara Park and the Whirlpools.

Tour package includes: luxury motorcoach transportation, first-class step-on-guided tour of Niagara Falls USA and Canada featuring all highlights, Maid of the Mist Boat Tour, full luncheon overlooking the Falls, applicable taxes and meal gratuities.

Tour #6 - The Finger Lakes Railway Experience

Wednesday, July 23 7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.

\$85 per person

Discover central New York and the history of the railroad there with this full-day excursion that takes you on the Finger Lakes Railway from Geneva to Canandaigua

– with a lunch layover in Shortsville! Ride in vintage NYC gray smooth-side passenger cars pulled by “lightning stripe” engines.

Your guides will share the Erie Canal Heritage Corridor with you on the two-hour ride to your boarding Station in Geneva. Interpreters will share more about the history and developments of the railroad in this region.



Featured on this tour is the story – told by costumed historic presenters – of the baseball league that became a regional fixture featuring teams from every rail yard in Central New York! Great rails, great history, and great fun as you enjoy central New York’s Finger Lakes region.

Tour #7 - Niagara Falls Supernatural Wonders
Thursday, July 24 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
\$75 per person



A tour of Niagara Falls like no other – experience the raging rapids at Three Sisters Islands, part of Goat Island State Park, which also features Terrapin Point, Luna Island and all of the favored vantage points to view and experience the Falls. Tour includes admission to Cave of the Winds – a walkway at the base of the American Falls, and the world-famous Maid of the Mist Boat Ride, with admission to the Observation Tower.

Enjoy a delicious picnic lunch at Whirlpool State Park, along with the opportunity to view the Whirlpool.

Your tour also includes the New York State Power Authority’s Power Vista – a complete hands-on experience for the whole family. Learn more about hydroelectric power generation while viewing the two massive power generation

facilities at Niagara.

A special addition for the LCCA is a presentation on the Great Gorge Railroad, which ran from the late 1800s to 1935 by New York Parks interpretive staff, complete with visuals.

Tour #8 - Buffalo Harbor Cruise
Thursday, July 24 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
\$85 per person



Our day begins with a visit to the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens where you’ll stroll through the most intact Frederick Law Olmstead (designer of New York City’s Central Park) landscape and arboretum in the country. The Victorian tri-dome glass conservatory is home to exotic horticulture treasures from different climates.

Next, we’ll board the Miss Buffalo Cruise Boat. This tour is unique as it travels on three different bodies of water – the Buffalo River, Lake Erie, and the Niagara River – and through a lock; all on an international boundary line. Pass under the Peace Bridge and the International Railroad Bridge and then continue to Strawberry Island. You’ll see fabulous sites and hear about the history and unique facts of the greater Buffalo/Niagara region. A delicious luncheon at a waterfront restaurant compliments this tour.

Tour package includes: luxury motorcoach transportation, admission to the Botanical Gardens, luncheon at Shanghai Red’s Waterfront Restaurant, Miss Buffalo narrated scenic harbor cruise, meal gratuity and standard taxes.

Tour #9 - Buffalo’s Best
Friday, July 25 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
\$80 per person

Discover Buffalo – historic, eccentric, entertaining, scenic, and exciting. You’ll be surprised at the hidden gems and world-class, must-see highlights that will create memories of a lifetime. Our step-on guide will escort your group to internationally acclaimed art and architecture and through Buffalo’s Central Terminal, Forest Lawn Cemetery, and Millionaires Row – a living museum of Gilded Age grandeur featuring homes of astonishing size and splendor. And there’s more!



Visit the Buffalo Transportation Pierce-Arrow Museum featuring automobiles made in western New York including Pierce-Arrow and Thomas Flyer. The Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park is a one-of-its-kind attraction in the nation. All branches of the Armed forces are represented in the park's exhibits. A visit to Buffalo isn't complete without a lunch stop at the Anchor Bar – home of the original chicken wing – for a “taste” of Buffalo's best.

Tour #10 - Buffalo's Religious Architecture

Friday, July 25 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
\$48 per person



Visit Our Lady of Victory Basilica, First Presbyterian Church, Temple Beth Zion, and Trinity Episcopal Churches. “Lord, I love the beauty of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells” (Psalm 26 2:8). How better to describe this architectural journey to Buffalo's houses of worship.

We'll experience the magnificence of Buffalo's religious architecture with a visit to these four fabulous sites.

Following your tour, lunch will be at The Pearl Street Grill which is quickly becoming “downtown's most fun and exciting restaurant.”

Tour #11 - Ladies Day Out at Galleria Mall Shopping & Lunch

Saturday, July 26 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.
\$30 per person



The Walden Galleria Mall, the area's largest enclosed shopping mall, is located in the Buffalo suburb of Cheektowaga. Walden Galleria comprises 1,600,000 square feet of retail space, with more than 150 stores on two levels.

After a day of shopping, relax and enjoy a unique lunch experience at the Melting Pot Restaurant, where fondue truly becomes a memorable four-course dining experience. Patrons can dip into something different – and discover all the ingredients for a unique dining experience.

Transportation for Saturday's shopping is via White School Bus, an air-conditioned bus with cushioned seats. No lavatory. 

Tour photographs provided by Buffalo Niagara CVB (Chuck LaChiusa & Mark Parsons) and tour sites.

About LCCA Conventions

I am most impressed with the camaraderie I found at the previous LCCA Conventions in Denver and Chicago. Both events felt more like family reunions than gatherings of strangers with a shared interest in Lionel trains. I consider the many close hobby friendships I have developed and enjoyed even more valuable to me than the trains I've collected during the past 25 years.

*Michael Halebian
RM 15902*

LCCA 2008 Convention Schedule
Buffalo – Niagara, NY July 20-26, 2008

Sunday, July 20	Time	Notes
Registration Desk open	Noon – 7 p.m.	
Board of Directors Meeting	2 – 9 p.m.	Adam's Mark Hotel
 Monday, July 21		
Registration Desk open	7 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #1: Niagara History on the Rails	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	BBQ Lunch
 Tuesday, July 22		
Registration Desk open	7 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #2: Trains in Erie, PA	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Lunch at Union Station
Tour #3: On the Erie Canal	9 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Lunch at Lockport Locks
Tour #4: Casino Night	1 – 9 p.m.	Fallsview Casino Resort, buffet dinner included
 Wednesday, July 23		
Registration Desk open	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #5: Niagara Falls Experience	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	USA & Canada, lunch
Tour #6: Finger Lakes Scenic Railway	7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Lunch in Shortsville
 Thursday, July 24		
Registration Desk open	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #7: Niagara Falls Supernatural	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Picnic Lunch at Park
Tour #8: Buffalo Harbor Cruise	9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Lunch at Waterfront
Get Acquainted Party	6 – 9:30 p.m.	Adam's Mark Hotel
 Friday, July 25		
Registration Desk open	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Trading Hall	7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Set-up for Exhibitors only
Tour #9: Buffalo's Best	8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch at Anchor Bar
Tour #10: Buffalo Churches Architecture	8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch at Pearl Street Grill
LCCA Business Meeting	2 – 3 p.m.	Adam's Mark Hotel
Lionel Seminar	3 – 5 p.m.	Adam's Mark Hotel
Trading Hall open	6 – 9 p.m.	For Convention Registrants
 Saturday, July 26		
Registration Desk open	8 a.m. – Noon	
Trading Hall open	8 – 9 a.m.	For Members only
Trading Hall open	9 a.m. – 3 p.m.	For Members & Public
Tour #11: Mall Shopping & Lunch	9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Walden Galleria Mall
LCCA Reception	6 – 7 p.m.	Adam's Mark Hotel
LCCA Banquet	7 – 10:30 p.m.	Adam's Mark Hotel
Convention Ends	after the Banquet	
 Sunday, July 27		
Trading Hall take-down	9 a.m. – Noon	For Exhibitors only

Safe Travel Home! See you in Sacramento – July 2009

Room at the Inn for Trains

by **Arthur Kristofik**
RM 1153

As owners/operators of the America's Best Value Inn in mid-Missouri, my wife Kathy and I decided to give something back to the community that used our facilities throughout the year. Our hobby interests were the method behind the magic – my toy trains and her ceramic Christmas Village. I'm strictly Lionel®; the only thing that isn't Lionel is her village.

The Fun Began in 2000

We created our first train layout in the hotel for the Christmas season of 2000. Although it was a last-minute decision, it became a destiny-determining one. It was a 9x16-foot layout, nothing fabulous or superb. It had two ovals and a figure eight, and we ran three trains at once. We put down some quilt batting as the snow. Kathy collected and painted Department 56-type buildings over the years and they become the Christmas Village around the tree surrounded by the trains. Within three weeks, we had all of it on that layout with three trains and a couple of operating accessories.

The 2003 Version



Since then, the layouts have grown in size and complexity every year; in some years, the layout grew a lot. In 2003, we put up the second layout. Instead of having visitors walk around the layout in the center of the meeting room in the hotel, we placed the platforms around the outside of the meeting room as an around-the-wall configuration. Its depth varied from four to six feet depending on the material I had on hand from previous layouts. Guests walked into the inside of the layout. That year's layout took a month to prepare.

We set up the Christmas village area with an oval track for the Lionel Trolley, then installed an animated carousel and an ice skating pond with skaters gliding along. We placed the Lionel Circus General Train Set on the layout with Lionel Ferris Wheel. Off to the side, we installed a farm



area with plastic farm animals and set a John Deere dealership nearby. A little farther off, we created a business and industrial area with the Lionelville Pipe Company and some Lionel semi-trucks nearby. We placed a Plasticville™ Gas Station and a Hobo Shack in the vicinity. Two Lionel Coaling Stations and a Water Tower marked the steam locomotive service area. The LCCA Municipal Airport Tower and Airplane Hanger arrived that year, and we had four trains running.

The 2004 Adventure

For 2004 the layout platform didn't enlarge, but we started the project earlier in





the year and decided to present themes in the various areas – the Christmas Village, the city, the amusement park. Lionel offered more amusement park items, so we installed the Bandstand. We added the Kiddie City Store, the Hot Dog Stand, the Pirate Ship Ride, and the Duck Shooting Gallery. I also placed the Lionel Hobby Store and the Aquarium on the layout along with more houses around the figure eight.

The biggest change in that year was the hinged bridge across the gap; that made the layout a complete oval. When visitors walked in, the bridge hinged up so that they could walk under it and be surrounded by the whole layout. Kids loved it, and they could get right up to the trains. The bridge is rather unique. It's made with a one-quarter inch plywood base and superstructure made from my old Kenner® Bridge and Girder sets. It's an impressive-looking bridge with a girder-type design with three lights on top. When we turned the room lights off, the bridge lights illuminated the track as the trains went through the span.

The 2005 Expansion

We built upon the basic board design and added themes to it – the Lionel Back Shop and the nifty Steam Clean, Wash Rack, and Wheel Grind operating accessory. We added the Transfer Table, a Diesel Fueling area, and a Water Tower for filling the tenders of steam locomotives.



In the city, we placed a Lionel Fire Station and its fire truck, followed by the Sawmill, Barber Shop, and the techno-looking Nuclear Power Station. We added the Ford dealership and Esso Gas Station. The amusement park and Christmas Village areas remained as-is.

This year, the Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus Handcar was in motion and a Christmas train made its rounds with some Christmas cars in the consist. We created an elevated area and some trains passed underneath it and emerged on the other side. The Santa Pylon with his sleigh and the reindeer flew over the layout. The Lionel Hot Air Balloon Ride also operated in the sky.



New Items for 2006

We used the same items last year but set it up in different ways. The city area now included the Icing Station, the Lionel Factory, the LCCA version of the Water Tower, the Oil Drum Loader, and the Diner with a road to it.

The piggy-back staging area included semi-trucks and container loads for loading and unloading with the huge M-1 Unit. We also placed a postwar Piggyback Unloader in that area. I had two operating cranes there as a reclamation area with the magnet picking up scrap metal and dropping it into waiting cars.

The 2007 Layout

A new feature for this year will be the massive bridge – 72-inches long and 12 inches wide – by the 100-Year



Bridge Company®. The walls of the train room are always decorated with Christmas train puzzles. The overall layout is 16x24 feet, and the inside area for visitors is about 5x12 feet plus the entryway of 5x5 feet.

The industrial area of the layout has the postwar action accessories – Log Loaders, Sawmill, Milk Platform, Operating Freight Station, Culvert Loader and Unloader, Oil Drum Loader, Lionel Factory, Grain Elevator, Fire Station, and other “familiar characters” in the toy train holiday drama. On the hill above the city are the business district buildings — the Five & Dime Store, Cotton Candy Store, the Hard Rock Café and others.

These structures are served by a trolley line going across

the bridge and into another area with the Charles Bowdish house set up as a farmstead, then the trolley continues to the city area and several houses. Below the houses is the Rover's Revenge accessory with its Postman carefully evading the dog. The Maiden Rescue, Route 66 Motel, and UFO Diner are set up there. The small city park has the Lionel Swing Set, Tug O War, and other appropriate park items. That area blends into the amusement park and the rides.

Publicity for the Event

In our first year we had a couple hundred visitors. The second year, we had about 600 people. For the third year, I put a note in the newspaper under *Current Events this Weekend*. In the fourth year, the layout was presented on the front page of the local newspaper, and a local TV news crew did an interview. In the fifth year, we were again featured on the front page of the newspaper, and a TV station came in for the story. During those two years we had well over 2,000 visitors. Now we regularly get phone calls asking, "Got the layout up?" or "Will you have it again this year?" I'm now known around town as "the train man."

The Stars of the Show

We always run the Christmas Train Set, the Santa Claus Trolley, and use the Christmas trolley bought for the Christmas Village. I can run a 25-car coal train and a 15-car passenger train behind a Norfolk & Western "J" or a couple of their F3 diesels. I have run western-style passenger cars with a General loco on point. I like to show off the silver Congressional cars, and I use Santa Fe and Amtrak locomotives or whatever I have on hand. I don't have the Polar Express Set.

My favorite railroad is the Wabash, but I don't own much of it. This year I'll place the #2367 Wabash diesel A-B-A set on the layout with silver passenger cars behind it.

Ironically, I don't have a passenger station for the passengers – a design oversight!

I'll also run the Virginia #741 steam engine. Behind it, I plan to hook up all the husky stack trains. We'll have a total of six trains running independently this year on the layout. I do it the old fashioned way – conventional operation with three ZWs for track power but without TMCC™. I use a "T" as the power source for all the operating accessories.

The Gee Whiz Factor

Most visitors gape in pure amazement. The majority of people have never seen anything this size or complexity, and each year it gets more complex. In the first year we had eight operating items, last year we used about 45, and this year we'll have about 60.

I love to play with my toys, and it's fun. Naturally, it's been a great advertisement item for the hotel. I get calls from people who inquire, "Is this the hotel with the train layout? I want to make a reservation and see those trains when we travel to Branson, Missouri for the holiday music shows." Some people come a half-dozen times during the season to see it, and some visitors return year after year.

We'll open the layout this year on the weekend after Thanksgiving. At this writing (in October), the layout is about 65 percent complete. It only takes a few days to set up the Christmas Village because there's not as much animation there. Kathy hand-painted those ceramic buildings over a 20 year period; there are about 60 of them now.

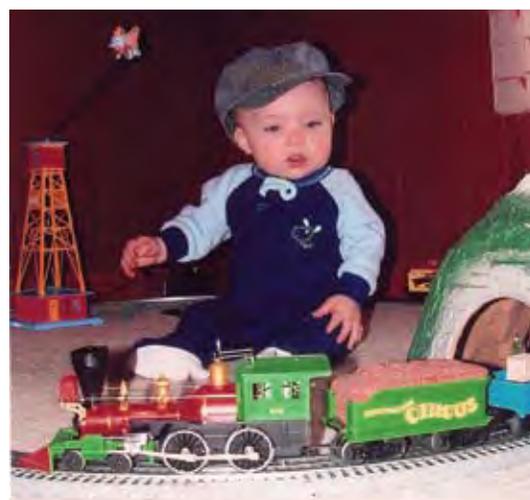
By the time LCCA members read this article, we will have greeted at least 1,000 visitors with another 1,000 or more to follow. It's a great way for us to share the spirit of the season. 🚂

Photographs by Arthur Kristofik

Mason's Pride and Joy

Eight-months-old Mason Yarney is the grandson of proud grandpa Phil Capion (RM 15540). Mason is enjoying his Lionel® Circus Train with extra cars and Dumbo Pylon. He also has the Thomas the Tank Engine Set and its expansion set, G-scale Holiday Express Set, and other engines and cars.

Mason and grandpa enjoy their train time together. Hopefully, a permanent layout is in the near future. Mason will surely become a card-carrying LCCA junior member later on. 🚂



Photograph by Phil Capion

by Bill Schmeelk
HM 6643

New FasTrack Section – To Cut or Not To Cut

In the previous issue of *TLR*, we published a chart of track lengths that could be assembled using different combinations of FasTrack™ lengths. Although the addition of the 1-3/8-inch track section more than doubled the possible lengths that can be assembled, there are times when there might be a better answer. For instance, let's say you just finished assembling your layout and to complete it, you find that you need an 8-1/4-inch section. Great – refer to the chart for 8-1/4, and you'll find that such a section can be made by connecting six 1-3/8-inch sections. While making a section of that length is possible, an 8-1/4-inch section with six joints is not the most efficient method, nor is it economical.

In this case, the best answer is to custom cut a special section. As we discussed last issue, cutting FasTrack is a bit more complicated than cutting tubular track. You can't simply cut a piece off the end. If you did that, the section would not mate with any other FasTrack section, with the possible exception of the O-gauge transition piece. There is a better way; simply cut a section out of the middle of a track section. Before attempting to explain the procedure, I tried it myself and what follows is a complete description with photos on what I feel is the best method to make custom lengths of FasTrack.

Let the Cutting Begin

For our example, let's assume I need a section that is 8-1/4 inches long. If the section you want is less than 10 inches, it will only require one standard section of FasTrack. We want to remove a section from the middle and reassemble the track. That leaves us with a section that retains the two original ends and can easily be connected to other sections of FasTrack. The first decision is exactly where the first cut will be made. If you look at the underside of a section of FasTrack, you'll notice the bent metal tabs which secure the rails to the plastic roadbed. When the track is cut, you want to leave as many of these remaining in place as possible. You also want to avoid cutting the track over the metal plate which connects the two outer rails. If need be, this plate can be removed before cutting. Subtracting the length we want (8-1/4 inches) from the full length of 10 inches, we get a length of 1-3/4 inches to be cut away from the middle of the track in order to preserve the two ends of the track.

Cutting the track square is very important. For that reason, a miter box is a very efficient method. I purchased an inexpensive plastic one at a home improvement store. One feature that I liked was that its front side had a lip which overhangs the table and holds the miter box in position as you cut on the forward stroke of the saw. Typically, a back saw is used with a miter box. This is not acceptable for

cutting metal, and I substituted a hacksaw with a 32-teeth-per-inch blade.



Photo 1 shows the setup as the sawing proceeds. You must hold the track firmly while sawing. Once you get through the metal rails, the cutting will go quickly. After the first cut was made, I positioned the two pieces as shown in

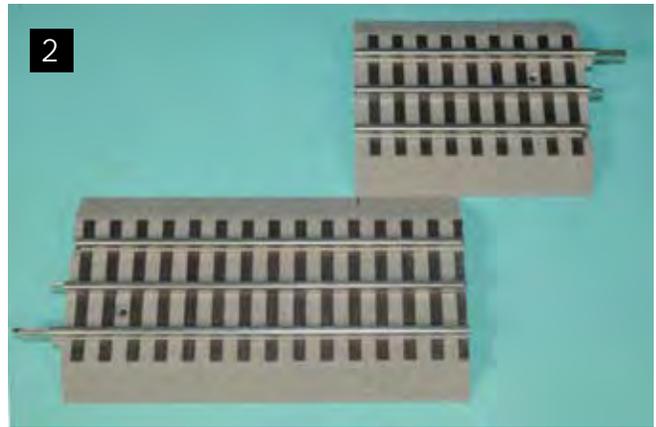
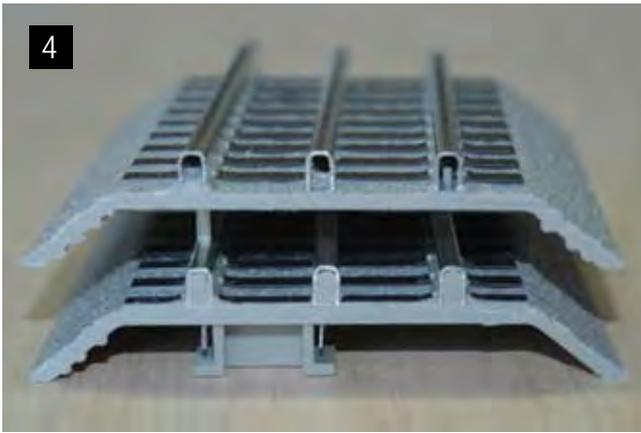


photo 2 and set them so that the measurement from the end of the cut piece to the end of the remaining piece was my desired track length – in this case, 8-1/4 inches. I then marked the larger section at the point where the smaller section ended. This is where the second cut must be made on the larger piece. This is cut in the same manner as before, using the miter box.



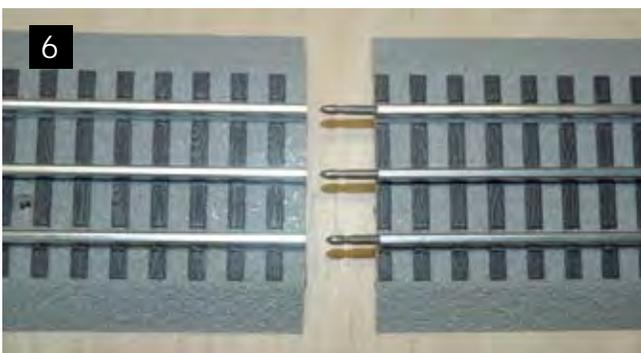
Photo 3 shows the result. The very short middle piece can be discarded. Next I used a sanding block with 120 grit sandpaper and carefully smoothed the cut edges. Be careful not to sand it too much; all you want to do is remove the saw marks and leave a smooth, square edge for gluing. It takes very little sanding to achieve this. If you sand too much, you may lose the squareness of each piece and they will not mate perfectly. **Photo 4** shows the two cut edges after sanding.



The next step is to drill into each of the rails at the cut end of each piece. This is done with a 7/64 inch drill as shown in **photo 5**. The drilling is necessary because there are plastic supports spaced at about 1/4-inch intervals under each



rail. These can be seen if you look at the small section to the left of the track being drilled in **photo 5**. Drill to a depth of at least one half the length of an O-gauge track pin. Be sure to keep the drill against the inside top of the rail and support the rail from above with your finger.

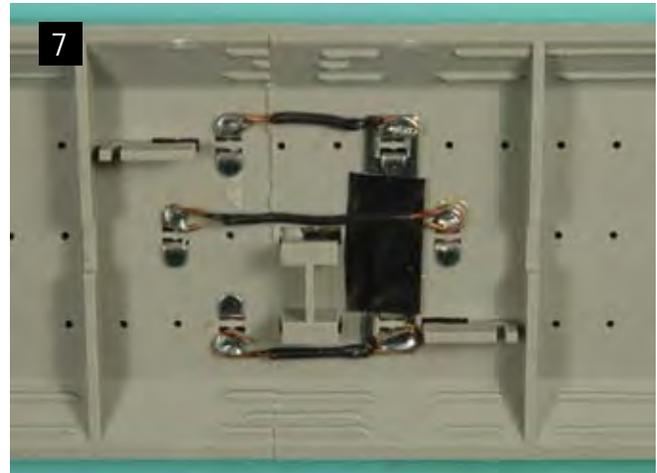


Now place a standard O-gauge track pin into each rail of one of the sections as seen in **photo 6**. You can now press the two sections together for a test fit. If you've been careful, the rail tops and the roadbed will line up properly. For the glue to hold properly, the joint of the two sections of roadbed should touch without any gaps. Next, separate the two sections and place the pins in one section. Sparingly apply Superglue™ (cyanoacrylate) to the edge of the roadbed

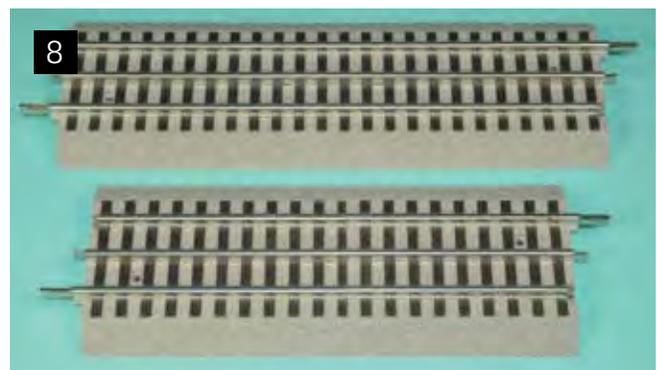
on the section without the pins. Place both sections on a flat surface and push them together and hold them tightly for about 10 seconds. Although many of these glues are called instant, their full strength is not developed for up to 24 hours. We're almost finished, but there is one more important step.

One Last Step

To assure the best conductivity, the rails of each section of the new piece should be soldered together. I usually prefer stranded wire, but in this case, the joint will not be moving and solid wire is quite suitable. I used 18-gauge copper wire. **Photo 7** shows the completed soldering. In this particular case, I soldered to the connecting plate. Depending on the



length you are making, this plate may not be there. Simply solder from the metal tabs of one rail to the tabs of the same rail on the other section. Do this with all three rails. Notice that in my example, I had to bring the center rail wire across the plate which connects the two outer rails. It is very important that this center rail wire does not make contact with this plate as that would result in a short circuit. I assumed that I would have no problem as the wire insulation would keep any contact from occurring. I discovered however, when I soldered the wire, that the insulation shrunk and bare wire came very close – too close – to the plate. I then removed the center wire and placed a piece of electricians tape over the plate. If I had it to do over again, I might simply remove the plate or at least loop the center



wire so that it approaches the connection from the opposite side. **Photo 8** shows the completed section along with a standard 10-inch piece for comparison.

Stocking Stuffers

Here are a few items you might consider to fill that space at the top (or bottom) of that stocking hung for the holidays. Each is priced under \$20; perfect gifts for that train-loving loved one.

Paper Collectors Rejoice

About 17 years ago, Greenberg published "A Guide to Lionel Paper and Collectibles." This book by Robert (Bob) Osterhoff became an excellent reference and comprehensive guide to all kinds of Lionel paper – from catalogs, to advertising sheets, posters, instruction sheets, stationery, billboards, service station bulletins and more. In addition to paper items, the book also featured chapters on service station tools, non-train collectibles and dealer displays. While no such book can ever be called complete, this volume provided a very useful resource and covered Prewar through Modern Era Lionel. The book has long been out of print and Kalmbach Publishing has no plans to reprint it.



I've seen the book for sale at prices well above \$100, when and if you can find a copy. Thankfully, Bob has decided to release a digital edition of the original book. The hardbound edition of the book sold for \$39.95 in 1990 when it was released. Now, for less than half that amount, you can purchase a DVD from the author containing the entire book in PDF file format. This digital edition contains every bit of the information included in the original book; photos and all. The DVD is an exact copy of the book and although the values listed are well out of date, the information remains a valuable resource. Bob is interested in making this information available to collectors and is selling this digital version for a very reasonable \$12.50 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling. Bob is a long time member of LCCA and a recognized authority on Lionel paper. You can order the DVD directly from him at: 1622 Garden Valley Drive, Wildwood, MO 63038.

New from Kalmbach

Kalmbach's latest book for those with an interest in operating their trains is Peter Riddle's "Trackwork for Toy Trains." Are you one of those who have always had plans to build a layout, but haven't quite gotten around to it? One of the decisions you'll have to make when designing

your layout is the type of track to use. Today there is a wide variety of options available. In this latest Kalmbach book, Peter Riddle discusses the different types of track you might select. Discussions include FasTrack, Gargraves®, Realtrax®, Atlas®, Ross® and the more-than-100-years-old tubular track that is still a viable solution for many.

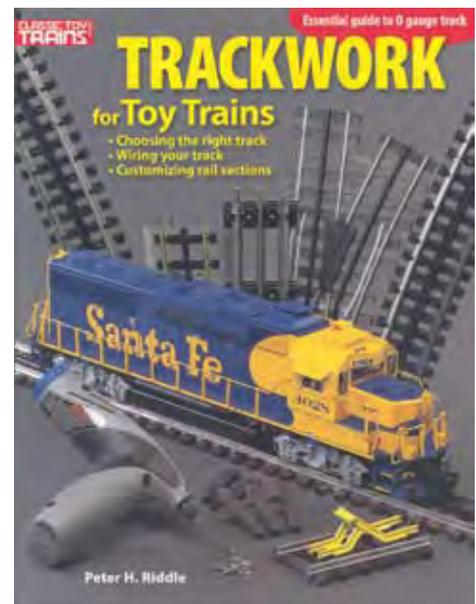
The first chapters are each devoted to the different types of track. A table displays the lengths of available straight sections for each brand and another lists the radius available in each. As you might expect, the wiring techniques differ from brand to brand and these methods are discussed for each type.

Techniques for laying flexible track are also discussed. The reader can clearly see the pros and cons of sectional track versus flexible track. Each type of track offers a different set of advantages and the author does a good job of exposing the reader to the advantages of each type. He does not make the decision for you, but presents enough information for you to make a decision that you'll be happy with.

Another chapter deals specifically with switches. Several different options are discussed. Another chapter is devoted to track other than straights and curves. Here we see several different types of crossings and how to wire them for different applications. Operating and uncoupling sections for the different track types are shown and discussed.

The final chapter deals with roadbed. Here again we see several options presented, everything from plastic roadbed sections to vinyl and cork roadbed. If realism is your preference, ballasting and coloring are discussed.

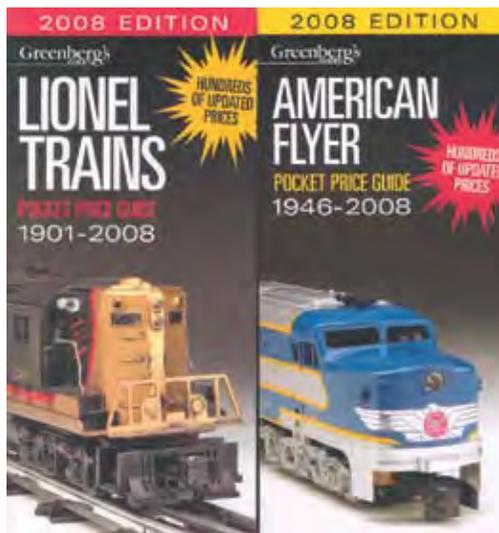
The book is profusely illustrated with over 250 color photos which detail the actions, step by step. Peter Riddle's writing style is comprehensive, but easy to understand. The 96-page book is 8-1/2x11 inches and bound between soft covers. It sells for \$19.95 and is available from your favorite train store or direct from Kalmbach by calling (800) 533-6644 or on the web at www.KalmbachBooks.com.



Updated Guides

Kalmbach has just released the latest versions of their popular pocket price guides. There's one for American Flyer and one for Lionel. The Flyer book covers Flyer's S gauge

production from 1946 to present day and includes product produced by Gilbert, Lionel, American Models, and S-Helper. A final section deals with Gilbert paper from 1946 to 1967. The 96-page Flyer guide sells for \$14.95. Within each section, items are listed in numerical order.

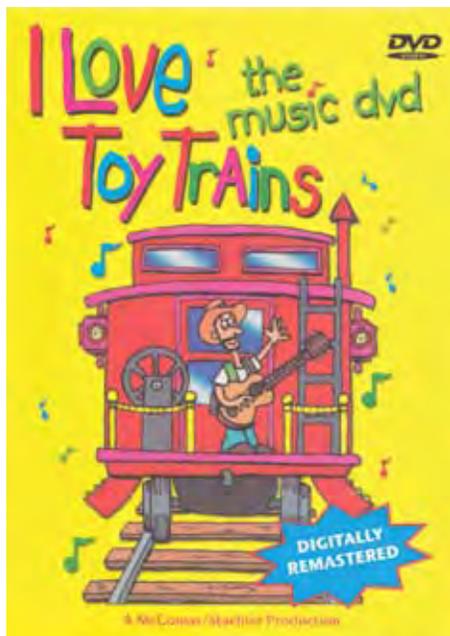


The Lionel guide covers production from 1901 to current production. Lionel's HO and Large Scale are not included, but a chapter does include club cars, grouped by club and special production items. A final chapter lists Lionel's catalogs from 1945 through 2007. The 320-page Lionel guide sells for \$17.95.

Each guide provides a handy reference in a convenient size and provides a suggested fair market value based on the collective input of knowledgeable dealers and collectors. They are available from your local dealer or direct from Kalmbach.

I Love Toy Trains Music

Most of us are probably familiar with the "I Love Toy Trains" series that TM Books and Videos produced over the years. In all there were 14 volumes. These videos featured many original songs and music by James Coffey. This two-disk set on DVD, "I Love Toy Trains – the Music" features all of the music from that series, 44 songs in all. Along with the music is lots of train action from many layouts



along with shots of the real prototypes upon which the trains are modeled. The videos also feature many of the fun scenes featured in the original series. There's no narration here, just

the trains and the music – perfect inspiration for that TV next to your layout building space. My favorite scene was watching the majesty of the Norfolk and Western "J", the Lionel models and the real thing, to the tune of Beethoven's 5th Symphony. This special two-DVD boxed set is on sale at a reduced price of \$19.95 plus shipping and handling at TM Books and Videos at (800) 892-2822 or on the web at www.tmbv.com.

Black Diamond Railroad and More

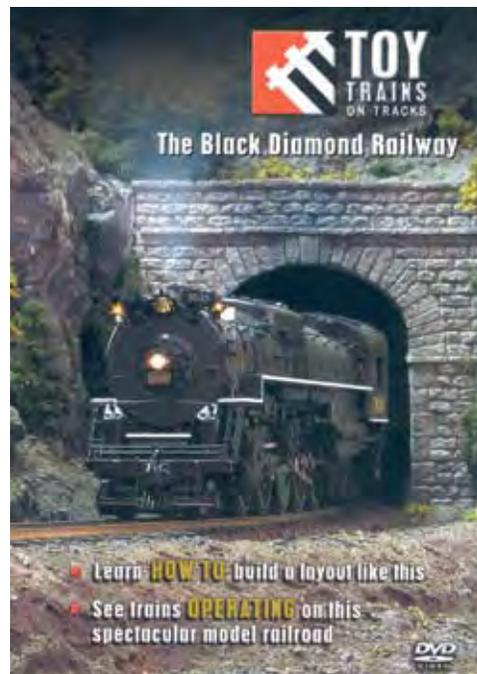
Finally, for some real inspiration, comes a DVD video from Toy Trains on Tracks. The Black Diamond Railway video does more than show off a beautiful layout. The layout was featured on the cover of the fall 2006 *O Gauge Railroading* magazine

and is in the home of Rich Battista. Rich is your host on the video and he takes you from the planning and development to the actual construction and operation. The layout has three levels and is beautifully scenicked.

The video shows you construction techniques for the bench work, track work, wiring, road system, urban scenery, ground cover and ballasting, retaining walls and bridge structure, and finally for the very realistic rock faced mountains. The mountain techniques are explained while we watch the process being performed.

The videography is quite good and in addition to the scenes of the layout, you also see scenes of real railroads that were very accurately duplicated on the layout. Rich has done a very professional job, both in the construction of his layout and in the production of the video. Rich has involved the entire family in the four-year project and the result is stunning. There's much information on the video that would be helpful to anyone building a permanent layout. The video is 73 minutes long and sells for \$19.95 plus shipping and handling. You can preview the DVD and place an order at www.toytrainsontracks.com.

That's it for now. Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy holiday season with lots of orange and blue boxes nearby.



Photographs by Bill Schmeelk

E-mail Bill at: bill@wellingtonent.com

What's New from Lionel for the 2007 Holiday Season

by Erol Gurcan
RM 26800

I recently had the opportunity to speak with some of Lionel's senior executives including President and CEO Jerry Calabrese, Product Manager Matt Ashba, Chief Technology Officer John Zahornacky, and K-Line by Lionel™ Product Manager Nick Ladd. They described what the company is doing this holiday season and for 2008. Here's a summary of the conversations.

What's Happening at Retail Stores

Consistent with CEO Jerry Calabrese's marketing plan, the company will sell trains to the general public in mainstream retail stores again this holiday season.

Like last year, the stores will include Macy's, Target, FAO Schwartz, and Fortunoff. Last year, Macy's carried Lionel trains only in its Northeast stores; this year, trains will be sold on a nationwide basis. Macy's will carry the Pennsylvania Flyer Set (6-30018), Polar Express Set (6-31960) and G-gauge, battery operated Polar Express Set (7-11022). Some Macy's stores will have static displays of Lionel trains. Target will offer one steam set, one diesel set, and the G-gauge Polar Express Set. These trains will be featured on aisle end caps.

Lionel trains will once again be offered in the Neiman Marcus and Hammacher Schlemmer catalogs.

One new retail chain, Linens and Things, will also sell Lionel trains this holiday season. They will carry the Pennsylvania Flyer Set and have the G-gauge Polar Express Set running in their stores.

Trains in Action

If you live close to New York City, public layouts featuring Lionel trains will be in operation at the New York Transit Museum within New York's Grand Central Terminal (42nd Street and Lexington Avenue), and at Santa Land at

Macy's at Herald Square (34th Street and Sixth Avenue). FAO Schwartz in New York City will have an operating layout. Six Fortunoff stores in the New York/New Jersey area will have operating layouts. The three in New York are in Westbury, Melville, and White Plains; the three in New Jersey are in Paramus, Woodbridge, and Wayne.



Jerry Calabrese, Lionel President and CEO



Matt Ashba, Lionel Product Manager



John Zahornacky, Lionel Chief Technology Officer



The Hogwarts Express train set may be the most-requested toy of young hobbyists for this holiday season.

The Hogwarts Express

The highly anticipated Harry Potter Hogwarts Express train pulled into hobby shops in early November. See the review of this new product in this issue of TLR. The level of expectation is high for this set since it is on the cover of the current catalog. Jerry Calabrese stated that initial dealer orders for this set were very good.

According to Calabrese, the marketing plan for the Hogwarts Express will be the same as it was for The Polar Express; i.e., to offer

additional passenger cars and related items for a few years after its initial introduction. Other possible accessories include buildings appropriate to this set. Lionel product manager Matt Ashba stated the additional accessories will be available in the fall of 2008. A G-gauge, battery-operated Hogwarts set will also be available in the fall of 2008.

The Legacy System

Lionel's new Legacy System™ remote control technology was first demonstrated at the 2006 LCCA Convention in Denver. It was recently shown at the train meet in York, Pennsylvania, on October 18-20. As this article goes to press, the system is scheduled for release in late December or early 2008. A Legacy instructional DVD is also in the works. Along with two current catalogs, Lionel sent LCCA members a \$30-off coupon good toward the purchase of this advanced system, and members are eager to use it.



Cardboard Tunnel Scenic Dioramas

Several ready-to-run trains sets offered in 2008 – the Pennsylvania and New York Central Flyer sets, Polar Express Set, Hogwarts Express Set, and Cascade Range Logging Set – will come with a cardboard tunnel scenic diorama that will increase their play value. The dioramas will be unique to the theme of each set. They are less elaborate than Lionel's Trainstage™ system which is currently offered on pages 200-201 of the 2007 Volume 2 Catalog.

Items Planned for 2008

Other famous European-style steam engines will be offered in 2008.

Lionel Product Manager Matt Ashba stated the Best Friend of Charleston train was a big hit for Lionel. They will continue to offer a series of other similar historical trains made of highly detailed brass. It will constitute a niche market and more information will be available in the next catalog.

Six Heritage Series and one Union Pacific diesel locomotive SD70ACe will be in stores this December or early 2008. The Union Pacific version, which is not a heritage series item, will be available with a matching dummy locomotive. A CA-4 Union Pacific caboose will be offered as a bring-up-the-rear companion.

K-Line by Lionel® Product Manager Nick Ladd stated that the popular 18-inch heavyweight and aluminum passenger cars will be offered under a variety of road names in 2008. A black Southern Trainmaster will be made, and a Milwaukee Road set pulled by an EP-5 will be cataloged. Calabrese noted that four to five new steam engines will be sold under the K-Line by Lionel brand.

Latest Techno News

Regarding technological matters, Chief Technology Officer John Zahornacky stated he is working on a process that will allow TMCC™ to control vehicles running on Superstreets™. He has also been working on the electronics that control locomotive lighting features. Some of the locomotives that already have these improvements will be available soon. He also wants to bring Legacy to American Flyer S gauge, but there is no timetable for this at the present time.

Other surprises are planned for 2008, but I do not want to give them all away or there would be nothing to look forward too! 

Photographs by Erol Gurcan

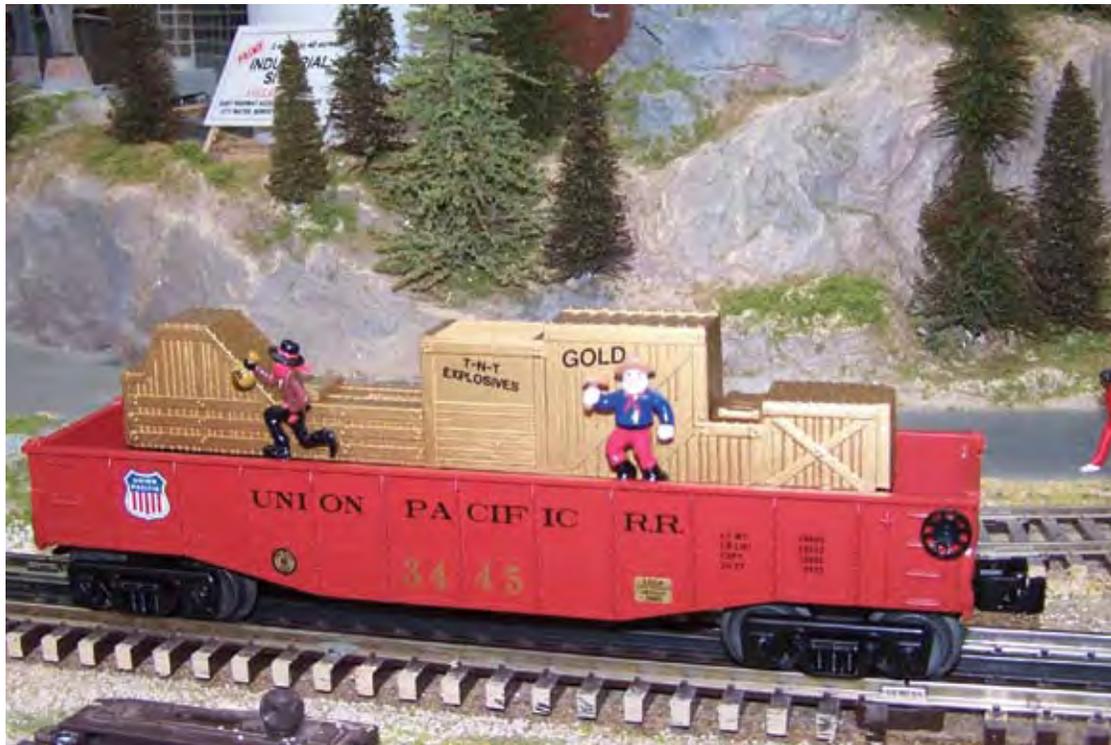
FUN, FOLLY, FELO

Four Special Offers for LCCA Members Who

The Maintenance of Way cars on the railroad – real or 1:48 – need not be derelicts. This C&O Operating Ballast Tamper is an action car that mimics the realistic tamping action at the roadbed as it moves along the right of way. The made-for-LCCA version of this Lionel® product bears unique added décor commemorating the LCCA 2007 Convention in Chicago. This car contains the logo of “The Home of the George Washington” and other distinctive markings from this club event. If you couldn’t attend this Convention, here’s your chance to add this limited-edition collectible to your inventory!



Rediscover the fun side of the toy train hobby with this LCCA limited-edition Union Pacific Chase Gondola with die-cast trucks. The crates are painted gold with “gold dust” flecks added, so the paint scheme is unique to LCCA. The non-stop whimsical action shows a gold mine thief scampering away with loot followed by an irate prospector in hot pursuit. LCCA 2003 Las Vegas On-site Convention Car markings are discretely applied. Very few of these cars are on hand, so act now!



LCCA presents these four cars to club members only, but the quantities are very limited. **These favorably priced offers are presented on a first-come, first-served basis.**

NY, AND FANTASY

o Missed these Opportunities the First Time



This classic operating car will delight youngsters and the young-at-heart. The robber has his own idea of “going for the gold,” and the prospector isn’t waiting for the local Sheriff to arrive and administer justice. Round and round they go! This Union Pacific Chase Gondola has die-cast trucks with built-in, cleverly hidden gears that drive the non-stop action.



The imagineers at Disney® created the basis of this fabulous fantasy car as the Aladdin Aquarium Car. The figures seem to float in air, not water. The cartoon images move in the lighted windows as the car rolls along the mainline bound for the enchanted city. This colorful car has die-cast trucks and the quality features of a Lionel product.

Layout provided by Arkansas Traveler Hobbies in Bald Knob, AR

limited. These items are in stock, so orders placed now will be delivered promptly.
first-come, first-served basis until the supply is gone.

Use the order form on the following page



Two Recollections of Al

I. Frank Douglas RM 23080

I purchased a new locomotive at a hobby shop and had trouble with the motor. That was how I discovered Joe's Hobby Shop in Little Rock, which in actuality was "Al's Hobby Shop" because Al Otten was the owner and repair technician. He replaced the motor through warranty. Somehow we just hit it off. We just liked each other and got to be friends.

Later, he asked me to help him maintain the train layout at the Children's Museum at the old Union Station downtown. That was almost 10 years ago, and we kept it operating for years for the enjoyment of the children.

Then I started working with him in the shop. He always had plenty of parts on hand and special tools. We worked together side by side, and I learned quite a bit about toy train mechanisms. He taught me how to put rivets in the trucks. His repair shop wasn't much bigger than a closet, but he had a work bench and train parts jammed into that space with wall-to-wall parts cabinets. He knew exactly where everything was.

I was intrigued with the electronic circuits built-in to the trains. I worked in the electronics field for almost 50 years. I started in the Air Force and worked on aircraft electronics, radios, and electrical systems. The work on the trains was a chance for me to keep up with my electronics, so it was a good thing for me.

Not many people got to see Al's home train layout and collectibles on display in the train room. I was around him for three months before I got a chance to see it. I helped him clean his trains one by one and also cleaned the glass shelves. He "invented" a nifty feature – cutting two grooves into the glass shelves to hold the O-gauge trains in position by their wheel flanges.

Al did a lot of gratis repair work and helped hobbyists keep their trains running. If a train repair was for a child, he'd often do the work at no charge except for the replacement parts – he was Santa's helper.

II. Johnny Ourso CM 33

I moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1972 for a job opportunity, and not long after I hosted a train show at the Holiday Inn on 65th Street. Al Otten came to that show, and I met him there. We hit it off and became good friends. He got into Lionel trains big time. We went to many train shows together after that.

In 1973, we went to the LCCA Convention. I was elected Vice President of the club and Al was elected Director. The rest is history, as they say. It was a real pleasure to serve the club with Al. He was a strong personality, and he knew how to get things done.



Albert F. Otten

When he worked for a bank in Memphis, Tennessee, he traveled on I-55 to a meeting in Jonesboro, Arkansas. A state trooper pulled him over. He walked up to Al's window and asked, "Sir, do you know how fast you were going?" Al said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Well I clocked you at 102." Al looked at him and said, "I'm sorry officer. Your radar gun must be broken. I was doing 109." The officer told him, "Mr. Otten, go a little bit slower now" and let him go. The trooper didn't have the heart to write him a ticket for his being honest.

In 1976, Al, Chuck Seddon, and I drafted the Constitution of the LCCA, which is the foundation of governance for the club. It has been changed to meet changing times, but its basic structure remains in use today. We spent about six weekends locked into a motel hammering out that document until we got it right. We were proud of the result.

When the Constitution was adopted and the organization began to take shape around its principles, Al moved pretty freely up and down the ballot. He held every club office and served as President four times.

Al and I co-hosted train shows in Little Rock, and we co-hosted the 1987 LCCA Convention in the city. He had some rough edges, but everybody who knew him and got close to him appreciated his dedication to the club. There was never any question about his loyalty to the grand purposes of the club. He relentlessly pressed it forward.

When he built his home layout, he hired a carpenter to build the table. Al and I did all the wiring on the layout. The wiring was my design. Al wasn't an electrician, so he had me do that part.

In 2000, Al was serving his final term as President. In collaboration with Lionel, he created the LCCA Third Decade locomotive for the club – a platinum and misty blue SD40 diesel loco and matching caboose. Nothing like it had ever been produced before – or since. He was very proud of that train. It was a very distinctive engine and caboose, and it still commands a pretty good price today.

I believe he'll be remembered for the work he did for the club as President. In the early 1970s when he was first elected to that position, the club was in dire financial straights. He righted the ship. The club wouldn't be where it is today if it wasn't for Al.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention Fran, Al's wife for a lifetime. She is just a doll, and she adored him. She kept him on a straight and narrow path at times. She's a wonderful lady, a gracious host, and a creative artist/designer. Her temperament and his were sometimes opposites. There was a curious attraction, commitment, and love over the decades — quite remarkable.

