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# *The* **Lion Roars**



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



A 50-year Dream  
Come True



# ONR, Susie Q, and You



Prototypes shown above may vary slightly from the actual products.

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

This limited-edition production run 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.

The Lionel Collectors Club of America (LCCA) offers these two distinctive cars of the northeast region — “Susie Q” and Ontario Northland RR — to members as the 2008 Convention car. 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.

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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.

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 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](http://www.lionelcollectors.org)

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**ON THE COVER**

Enter the wonderful world created in Carl Chancey's cellar. Based on 50 years of imaginative thought, it's filled with trains from the northeast region.

Photograph by C. Vallino Photography

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

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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- Membership Chair* - Joining LCCA and membership questions.
- Immediate Past President* - Complaint against another member.

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# The President's Report

by Richard H. Johnson  
RM 7103

These reports are really quite difficult to write. I'm writing this report on March 7, having just received my February issue of *TLR* yesterday. My report was due in Editor Mike Mottler's hands on February 29, but I told him I couldn't do it until after I had read the February issue cover to cover. Talk about deadlines and lead times!

As I write this report, all of you who ordered the C&NW/UP tank cars should have received your order. Wow, what a great-looking car! One Lionel® employee (who shall remain anonymous) declared this car to be "The Freight Car of the Year." Can you blame him? Whether you display your car or run it on your layout, you have to be thrilled with the way this car turned out. Great job, Lou Caponi and Matt Ashba!

Speaking of convention cars, don't forget to order your 2008 PS-2 Ontario Northland and Susquehanna hopper pair NOW. The order cut-off date for these cars is June 30, and we'll be adhering to this date with the hope that the cars will be produced and delivered by the end of this year. There are no complicated paint schemes or production processes associated with these cars. In fact, the designs and contracts were approved months ago. These cars will be highly sought after since they fit in with either O or Standard O consists.

LCCA has truly benefited from participating in the WGHOT program during the past two years. We've gained hundreds of new members and educated thousands more about the joys of owning and operating Lionel trains. Our partnership with Lionel, LLC is stronger than ever, and this benefits you, our members. No members of any other non-profit train club received all three of the 2008 Lionel catalogs *plus* a \$30 discount



The LCCA booth was next to Lionel at the recent World's Greatest Hobby on Tour show in Norfolk, VA. Visiting hobbyists signed up as new club members.

coupon towards the purchase of the new Lionel Legacy™ system. We continually strive to give our members "more bang for their buck."

I'm really pleased with the response we're receiving for this year's Convention in Buffalo! If you are planning on attending, please register now so you aren't shut out on the tours you want. Three tours have already sold out. This year's tours are exceptional, and the usual fellowship and fun will be present as always. We have lots of treats lined up for you, so don't miss out on this year's Convention.

About the time you receive this issue, you'll also be receiving your 2008 election materials. On this year's ballot, you'll be asked to elect a new Secretary and three new Directors at large. You'll also be asked to approve a number of minor constitutional changes so we can operate the club in a more businesslike, economical, and professional manner. A short questionnaire will be included with the balloting materials so we can obtain your input on a number of issues. As with national politics, your opinion counts, so please give us your input on the survey questions. You'll be mailing your ballot and the survey in the same envelope, and it won't take you more than five minutes to complete both the ballot and the survey. Please be sure to vote and give us your survey input.

While on the subject of elections, next year we will need to elect a new President-elect, Treasurer, and two Directors. It is never too early to begin thinking about next year's elections. If you feel that you are qualified to hold one of these positions, give me a call and let's discuss it. We're always looking for qualified, new people with fresh ideas and viewpoints.

Finally, I'm asking that you make it a point to read each issue of *The Lion Roars* and the *Interchange Track*. We try to keep you abreast of all current club matters in both of these publications as well as in the NEWS FOR MEMBERS page of our website. If you read these sources of information, you'll always be 100% up-to-date on all club activities.

Have a great spring! 🚂

# A Wonderland in the Cellar

by Carl Chancey RM 27557

## A Family Heritage

I've been in love with model trains since I was four years old. My father brought home the Lionel catalog each year, but we didn't have enough money to buy them. Finally in 1954, he brought a train home although the family budget was still tight. I imagined tunnels by running the train under the couch and created "scenery" by running it through a propped-up encyclopedia book.

My story fits the familiar pattern of most boys – coming of age, becoming interested in girls, going to college, getting married, and having a family. However, I never ever lost interest in trains, and I always wanted a layout.

I built train layouts with my son. But I transferred assignments every few years because I was in military service, and I had to rip them down. I sold what I had several times because we couldn't take it with us. It hurt every time.

## Great Timing

When I retired and moved into this home, I was blessed with a financial opportunity that enabled me to afford to have a large O-gauge layout professionally designed, built, and installed in the finished cellar downstairs. I discussed it with my wife, Merry. She's always been a partner in decision-making, and we realized it would be a costly project – as many dreams of a lifetime are.

We knew that I needed to continue working, so my time for self-building a layout would be limited. At that time, I had just retired from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and I was working for a pharmaceutical company. With stock options given to me by the company, I had sufficient funds to build the layout. So I took advantage of a unique situation – I had more money than time. Fortunately, I was in the right place at the right time with the right resources. She said, "You only live once. Do it." What I've learned about living with a lifemate is, when your wife is your best friend and vice versa, you can do these things. Merry appreciates the artistry of the layout and the benefit of relaxation from my job-related stressors. She enjoys showing it to people, and she is a great hostess. A keeper!

## My Search for a Builder

I knew through reading train hobby magazines and discussions with friends in the area that there were companies skilled in building so-called "high rail" model railroads. I reviewed the available options and I spoke with Michael Hart at Scale Models, Arts and Technologies (SMARTT). He developed a very interesting plan, and I brought him here on a Saturday in







November of 2000 for the day. He toured the cellar with me and took a lot of measurements. We discussed my interests then he returned to his office. Within a few days, he created a CAD rendering of the layout based on our conversation. It was exactly what I was looking for. It would fit into the basement perfectly, and it included all of the things that I wanted to have at a price I could afford.



I had been planning this layout in my mind for nearly 50 years, so I knew what I wanted. I'm a very easy-to-work-with person, and I don't take advantage of other people or challenge them just for the sake of contrariness. Besides, I wanted to get into Michael's queue as quickly as possible. He had other layouts in the pipeline, and I realized that every change or tweak I might consider would push my project back by six months to a year.

### My Plan and Preferences

I wanted a layout primarily for running trains without a significant amount of switching or yard work. The layout design represents the New England region. I wanted some mountain and river areas and just a small yard and engine service and storage zone like one would see in this part of the country. I certainly wanted to have a passing siding where I could run two passenger trains – one on a main

line with another train parked on the siding or stopped for boarding at a station. I dedicated the second main line to freight service. It has a reversing loop.

There are several small industrial scenes throughout the layout – an old New England mill, an oil distribution facility, and several smaller industries. The main industry is the railroad itself, and the engine service and storage area has a large footprint on the layout.



### Delivered in Pieces

The layout was delivered by truck as 12 segments; all carefully pre-measured to fit through the door to the cellar, down the steps, and into place. The fabulous swing-away gate has a curved bridge on top. It was the first time Michael designed a swing bridge on a curve. He told me that segment was the most difficult part of this entire project. Although the basement is heated and air conditioned, I must adjust the legs of that section twice a year – in October and May – to compensate for changes in local temperature and humidity. Over the years, the swing bridge section settled into the basement carpeting in that area, so I've made height corrections for that too. That one section is alive!



### On-the-job Training

I was a novice when this layout began about eight years ago, and I'm still learning as I go. At the outset, I relied primarily on Michael to make decisions about the wiring of the layout. Looking back with 20/20 hindsight, I now



know that I made one mistake. At that time, DCS™ was in its infancy. Because of that, I made the decision not to wire the layout for DCS; it was wired for conventional operation. I should have wired it for DCS. Within a year, local train buddies Marty Fitzhenry (RM 28444), Wally Brooks (RM 27539), and I made the wiring changes and installed DCS. Marty discovered how to use an 18 or 24 volt light bulb to increase DCS signal strength up to “10” all around. Marty is literally an electronics genius and was one of the people involved in testing the Beta programs and developing DCS for MTH®

Now, Lionel® has brought its Legacy™ system to the marketplace. When it became available a few months ago, I installed it also. I now have both technologies on the layout, and I can select the brand of control by a toggle switch.

### Scenicking the Layout

For cost reasons, I couldn't afford to have Michael go to the level of scenic detail I ultimately wanted. He installed basic scenery, and it looked fantastic although it



wasn't “fully treed” then. There were areas with only a light amount of grass or dirt; just enough to cover the bare wood platforms. Those areas were left for me to fill in later. I asked local scenic specialist Dave Frary to help me make it into the dream layout that I wanted. He is a “water effects” expert and is better known in HO circles. He's written books,



produced DVDs, and recently published an updated version of his scenery book through Kalmbach Publishing. My layout was the first O-gauge layout he ever worked on, and photos of my layout are included in that edition.

He worked on small sections at a time. What turned my thinking around concerning “complicated scenery” was his comment, “Carl, you have to understand something about model railroad scenery. Once you do it, if you don't like it, you just take it out and redo it. It's not set in stone.”

As simple as that may sound to most people, to me it was outside my nature and personality. I never would have thought of it that way. I'm a person who believes once you do something on a model railroad, you leave it there and don't dare touch it. Michael put a building in a certain location or trees in a certain position, and I would never think to move them because I believed he placed them there for a good reason.

But with Dave's words in mind, I began to move and add trees then move and add buildings. I became accustomed to making vignettes as I envisioned them in my mind. I'm now fulfilling my ideas about the highly detailed model railroad I always dreamed of.

I envision an area that I want to embellish – the engine facility area is a good example. I find as many detail parts as I can and work them into that area. If I add something that I don't like after it's installed, I take it out as Dave suggested and put in something else. I have an inner sense of when it looks right; then it's “done.”

### I Get a Lot of Help from my Friends



When the original layout was designed and delivered, Michael installed a switch at the far corner of the layout beyond the engine terminal facility. I asked him, “Why did you put it there – going to nowhere?” He said confidently, “Someday you might want to expand along that side of the cellar.” I never thought of that. When Marty and Wally looked at that area, they said, “Why not? Let's do it.” That space will soon become a six-track South Station yard with fantastic Boston Harbor and Fort Point Channel scenes. When we're finished, that area will extend the layout 10 feet beyond South Station.





I'm now working on a harbor scene. It gives me great pleasure to work with a team of hobbyists on this layout. In addition to Marty, Wally, and Dave, there's Dicky Donohue, Al Peters, Jerry Higgins, and Dave Connolly.

I recently received a plumbing supply company called Saba Plumbing from Model Tech Studios – a really neat building. By the time this article is published, a block-and-brick company will also be in place.



I have always dreamed of having a large waste transfer station and scrap yard processing center on the layout – where junked cars are crushed and metal scraps are loaded into gondolas. I found a company that's now in the process of designing a model of the equipment used to crush and shred vehicles, appliances, and things. When completed, that area will be another element of my dream realized.

I'm planning a "Skid Row" across the street from the scrap processing area. I already have buildings made by Downtown Deco to place in that area. These additions will "complete the layout," but I'll do continuous detailing of buildings and scenery work. It'll never be done, as we always say.

## My Operating Preferences

I'm a "let it run for the fun of it" type of operator. However, I respect the methods of others for operating their trains as they want to.

When the local group drops by, they love to watch trains winding through the tunnels and along the right of way. Visiting guests or families with kids are always awe-struck by the model railroad and the details on the layout.



I run northeastern road names such as Boston and Maine, New York New Haven and Hartford, Vermont Railways, Rutland, New York Central, and an occasional Pennsylvania item. I have some leased engines on the layout – Gilford and Fuerex. You might see a Delaware and Hudson because Gilford took over the D&H. And Amtrak, of course. I collect by road names more than by manufacturer, so I have trains by MTH, Lionel, 3<sup>rd</sup> Rail®, Atlas O®, and Weaver®.

The collection is now stable. I've sold some stuff in recent months; I had too much. Now I buy only the things I must have, and I'm no longer a knee-jerk buyer. I purchased the new Flying Yankee. For me, that's a must have, but I passed on the Burlington Zephyr.

## Actual People in Scale

I recently learned about Marcie, a woman in Pennsylvania who has a business called TrainsFormation. She custom-makes figures to scale. I sent her a picture of two friends – Marty and Lou Caponi – and she made two O-gauge figures of them. I placed them near the ice cream vendor on the layout. I gave a set to Lou and Marty as a





memento of our hobby-based collaboration and friendship.

I recently installed a U.S. Park Service forest ranger station built by Model Tech Studios. I called Marcie and asked if she could create two forest rangers for it – one holding a clipboard and one looking with binoculars. I'll place them in the ranger station.

Small details add a lot of realism and bring personality to your layout.

There's a section of the layout with a repair crew at work in a hole dug in the roadway. Dave created this scene, set the broken water pipe in the hole, and I placed the workers down there with



a shovel, pick, and sledgehammer. Later, I created a second roadway hole with an open manhole and a guy looking at it. The hole is filled with artificial water – a sewer overflowing with dirty, mucky water.

The outfitters store at streamside includes a fisherman in hip boots with a fly rod angling for a catch. That area was originally just a hillside and stream bed – nothing special about it. I told Dave, "I'd really like to put a bait shop over there." My jaw dropped, and it felt like my heart stopped when I saw him chiseling into the scenery and taking some

trees out. That's when I learned scenery isn't forever; it's not like cement. Now the area looks naturally right; like it always belonged there. Birds hang out on the roof.

### The Inspiration Factor

There's a wonderful rub-off effect from trains. Our substitute mail person told me that he went out and bought a train set for his grandchildren after seeing the layout. Dave Connelly told me that he's gotten some ideas from my layout, and I've gotten some from his super-detailed layout. Marty has borrowed some ideas, and I've borrowed ideas from his great layout. The inner core of guys in our local group serendipitously created an inspiration exchange, and we help each other. I help Marty with scenery, and he does my electronic stuff. I do scenery stuff for Wally, and he builds my woodwork. What goes around comes around, as they say. We work with and through and for each other. The human equation is the greatest benefit of our hobby.

### All in the Family

My son isn't into the hobby, but he's a collector – of comic books. He inherited the "collector gene," but it's attached to a different target! He loves to see the trains and spends some time with me when he visits home. He now lives in Chicago. He's getting married in September, and they're talking about children; so we're excited. Future grandkids could spark an interest in trains in the next generation of our family. Up in the attic we have stashed away an entire Polar Express train set with all the add-ons. We've got a hand-carved, wooden train walker. We're already "designated grandparents" waiting for biology to catch up. We'll be patient, but we're excited. This is a big year. 🚂

*Photographs by Mike H. Mottler and C. Vallino Photography*



# Of Historical Interest

by Richard A. Sliwka  
RM 8795

## A “New Way” to Count Lionel Profits in 1966


I’m sure most Lionel® dealers, past and present, review their sales and profits on a daily basis. With today’s high-tech accounting systems and desktop computers, this task can be done at a keyboard; but what about in years past? Recently, as my wife and I walked through an antique mall, we came upon an item intended to ease this chore in the mid-1960s.

In 1966 Lionel sales reps gave their dealers/customers a promotional item – an abacus, an ancient counting device invented in China. It was approximately 8x4-1/2 inches in size; just a half-inch high. It was made entirely of wood, and one side read “THE LIONEL TOY CORPORATION” and the other “ADD UP YOUR 1966 LIONEL PROFITS” – both presented in white-painted letters. It came in a red-brown cardboard “slide-in” box indicating that it was made in Japan by “Sun.” I’m sure an instruction sheet was originally included, but it was not available with this abacus.

I looked at a copy of the 1966 Lionel catalog. On the surface, it appeared to offer some quality products that might

require the use of this adding machine. The catalog had 40 pages, including the two cover pages. However, reflecting the decline in the general public’s interest in toy trains at that time, only 20 pages were devoted to toy trains including four pages of HO items. Another 18 pages displayed non-train products: slot car sets, science sets, telescopes, and phonographs. This appeared to be an attempt to diversify and improve the bottom line.

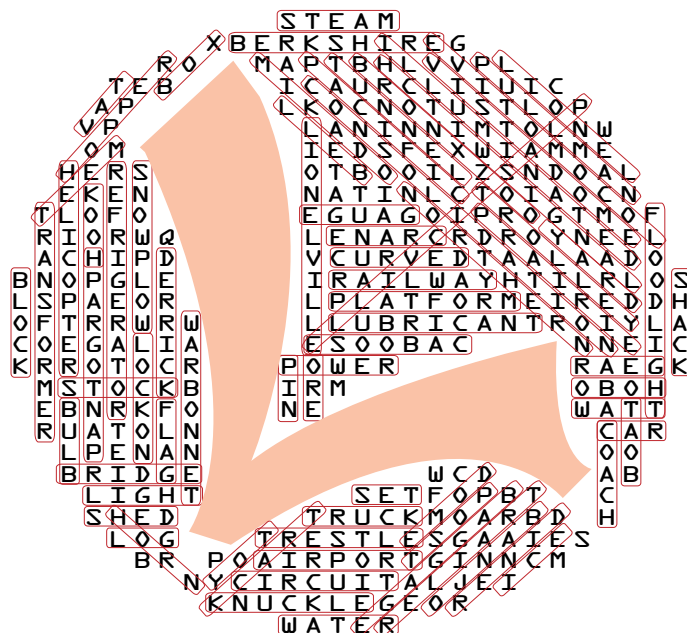
On the 18 pages covering O27 and “O” electric trains, the catalog showed 12 sets headed by some of the classics – 736 and 773 steam engines, 2322 Virginian FM Trainmaster, 2383 Santa Fe F3s, etc. In addition, 12 locomotives, two motorized units, 33 pieces of rolling stock, 22 accessories, and five transformers offered for separate sale. Prices ranged from \$3.50 to \$9 for rolling stock, \$40 for a ZW, \$225 for a nine-unit “Super O” 773 Steam Freight; and \$65 for a 2322 Virginian FM. In today’s world, this would have seemed a great occasion to use a counting device to calculate profits.

However, most of these were items leftovers from previous years and represented unsold inventory on dealers’ shelves. Inasmuch as 1966 sales were very disappointing, most of these promotional items were probably deposited in the “circular file.” The end of the postwar era for Lionel was at hand; in fact, in the following year, Lionel didn’t issue an electric train catalog. 

*Photograph by Dienzel Dennis  
of abacus in his collection*



## Answers to this Month’s Puzzlement





# BRUCE GREENBERG

## THE MAN, HIS BOOKS, AND HIS SHOWS

As told to Mike H. Mottler RM 12394  
by Bruce Greenberg RM 1519

*Editor's Note: Bruce Greenberg's work in the model train industry is based primarily on gathering and presenting detailed information and applying it to publishing books and re-defining train meets held around the country. His involvement in both activities brought an amazing degree of order and organizational efficiency to the hobby.*

### Train Meets: Why We Started

In early 1976, I had been on the road for almost two years selling my books at "train meets." This was difficult because of how train meets were organized then. Most train meets I attended lasted an hour or two in the morning. There was a great early rush, but the hall cleared by noon. Well, that may be sufficient for an event intended for a few hundred people who have very high levels of motivation, but the general public has a different perspective. They aren't going to be there at opening bell at 10 o'clock in the morning, and they expect afternoon activities. Or they already have Saturday plans and want to attend on Sunday.

That is when I started to think about sponsoring my own "train shows" rather than train meets. Successful train shows have several components that intertwine and complement each other. It is essential to have enough appropriate dealers with goods to sell in a high-value, relatively short-lived, two-day marketplace and to reach and bring in potential buyers. Train shows must provide entertainment – large operating train layouts and even train movies. Of course, it is just as critical to influence the media who will tell the world about the show. Each of these is a challenge, and each relates to the others. As our shows evolved, we developed an efficient method for doing each one.

Dealers want sales, a nice place to sell trains, and a comfortable environment with air conditioning in the summer and heat in the winter. The facility should be easy to find and recognize and have ample parking.

Customers want convenient access and a high likelihood of finding what they are looking for, whether it is a specific train or the experience of watching trains roll

along elaborate model railroads. They want the option of attending Saturday or Sunday.

As for the media, I asked, "How do I reach and interest them? What are their needs? And, what are they looking for?" Obviously, before the show, they need to be courted with attractive photographs and enticing information. The media are the information gatekeepers, and it is important they are well-equipped to inform the public and validate the show as a must-see event.

As the show sponsors, we gave great consideration to the place and the time. The show must last two days so as to give the television people opportunity to run stories on the Saturday evening news about the Sunday show. The show must last two days to secure an adequate financial return on the single largest expense other than hall rent – media purchases. One of our real challenges was convincing the dealers that our two-day event was different from a three-hour train meet and was in their best interest. That was difficult at the outset.

Toy train show dealers are not typical merchants. They are highly individualistic and want to do their own thing in their own way. For most, trains are a hobby as well as a business. Shows generate money for them to buy trains, but it is not usually their source of income for their rent or mortgage payments.

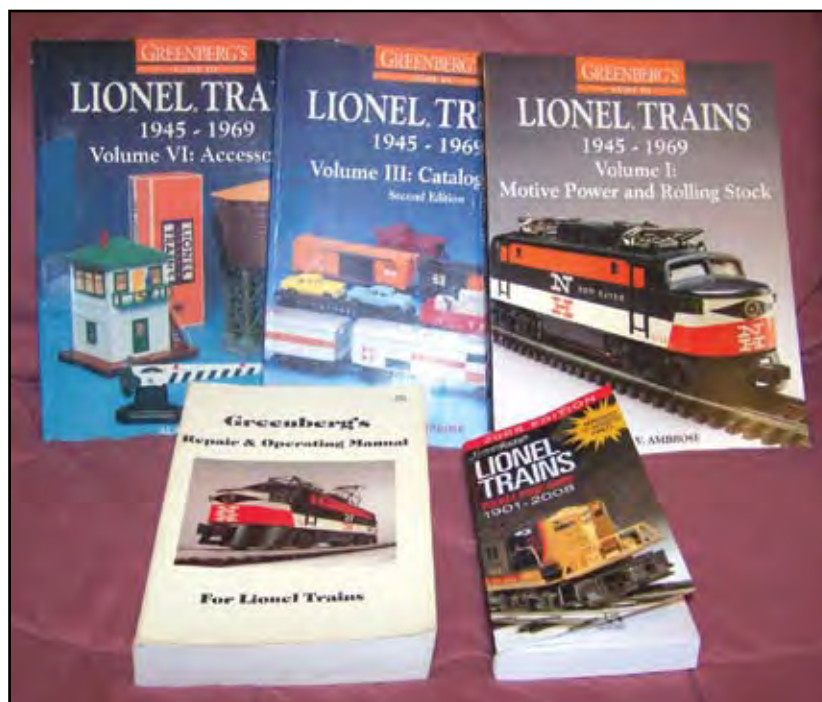
One of our challenges was to get these individualists to agree to some rules and to go along with them when "the rubber meets the road." It required the floor manager, initially me and later, Ralph Barger, and the very skilled managers who followed, to understand when to press a

point or when to appropriately back off.

Sold to  
Kalmbach

We sold both the Greenberg Publishing Company and Greenberg Shows to Kalmbach Publishing Company in 1991, 17 years ago.

After the sale, I stayed on for two-and-one-half years as the president of Greenberg Publishing, a Kalmbach subsidiary. I have not had involvement with Kalmbach management since





that time. My wife, Linda, stayed on for eight years as the president of Greenberg Shows. When Linda retired, one of her senior managers took over. A year or two later, Kalmbach sold the train shows to another party.

## A Cyclical Industry

American toy train manufacturers enjoyed booming sales in the 1920s, as did many other new manufacturers with new technology. The excitement continued into the early 1930s as late 1920s investments produced new products. However, the depression had a devastating effect on the toy train industry. In the late 1930s, as economic recovery began, the toy train manufacturers introduced new products that were exciting and generated increased demand.

In 1942, the government forced toy train manufacturers to convert to war production, just as consumer demand was rapidly growing. By 1945, the major companies, foreseeing the end of World War II, were planning new lines, and these lines were greeted with great public enthusiasm in 1945 and 1946. Toy train sales rocketed from 1946, and toy train companies produced new and exciting products: locomotives with smoke (as well as with whistles introduced earlier), reliable remote uncoupling, and clever animated accessories such as the milk car and the cattle car. Many boys born from 1943 through the late 1950s were captivated by these great toys as I was.



*Bruce Greenberg with his first train, a Lionel set, in 1947.*

Lionel® toy train sales peaked in 1953. I was amazed to learn this fact! What happened?

- For households with adults who had graduated high school, the penetration was 82%!
- Toy trains are a time-consuming hobby. Boys need time to learn how to operate trains and, more importantly, need time to learn the skills to build and decorate a train layout. Television swallowed up boys' discretionary time. With far less time for their trains, they were consequently, less satisfied with their trains.
- Other events in the late 1950s weakened the toy train companies, including the end of retail price agreements, the growth of discount stores, and problems in management transition.
- Another amazing fact – by 1960 less than half of Lionel's revenues was from toy trains. Gilbert went into bankruptcy in 1967, and Lionel narrowly avoided it.

Surprisingly, the early 1970s saw a spontaneous increase

in market demand for toy trains. That revival was not due to the skill of manufacturers making exciting new trains and bringing people into the market nor was it due to strong macro-economic conditions. What happened? Men in their mid- and late-20s with young families decided to resume their love affair with toy trains. They had the money to buy the trains they could not afford as children. And, they wanted to share their train passion with their children. The market was revived by people with a need rather than by manufacturers developing new or improved products that captured the public's imagination. It was an unusual event driven by demographics – the formation of families by baby boomer-generation men.

In the early 1970s, the toy train marketplace was dominated by one club, the Train Collectors' Association (TCA), and it was the largest organization of its kind. It sponsored train events but limited attendance to members only. I saw toy train interest growing rapidly among the general public. However, the TCA did not want to open its marketplaces to the public.

Based on my belief about the potential toy train market, we sponsored our first train show in December 1976 at the National Guard Armory in Ellicott City, Maryland. We achieved the result we were hoping for. We overwhelmed the dealers with buyers, creating a terrible traffic jam on the major highways nearby the Armory. The show succeeded because of media promotion and because the great demand for toy trains was not being met by traditional retailers. In essence, we created a toy train marketplace by creating a show that brought dealers, trains, and buyers together. Capitalizing on our knowledge and instinct, we happened to be at the right place at the right time. The market grew rapidly through the 1970s and 1980s, and we expanded our shows to very large buildings in Baltimore, Pittsburgh, northern New Jersey, Long Island, and Boston. We even sponsored Florida shows.

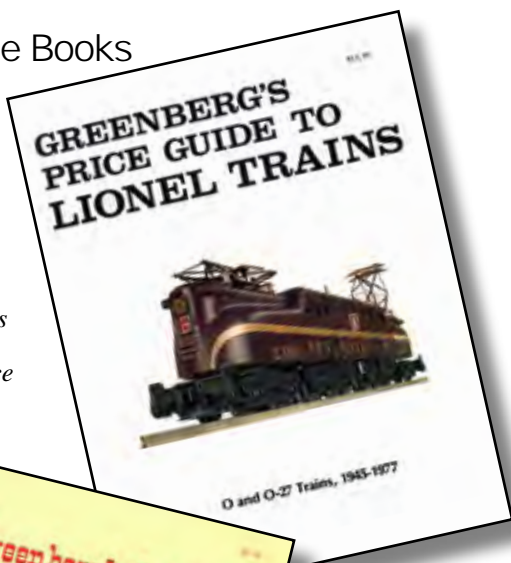
What happened subsequently was again driven by demographics. The last group of boys who enjoyed Lionel trains in number was born between 1955 and 1960. Add 30 years to those dates, and the matching time frame is 1985-1990. At this time, the last group of boys was now men between the ages of 25 and 30. If they married and had children, many would resume their toy train hobby. My data show that our toy train show market peaked in 1989 and 1990 based on what I call the demographic imperative described above.

Toy trains will be with us for a long, long time – maybe forever. But the hobby won't have that special enthusiasm that came from boys of the 1945 to 1955 era who grew up and became men with fond memories of their boyhood trains.

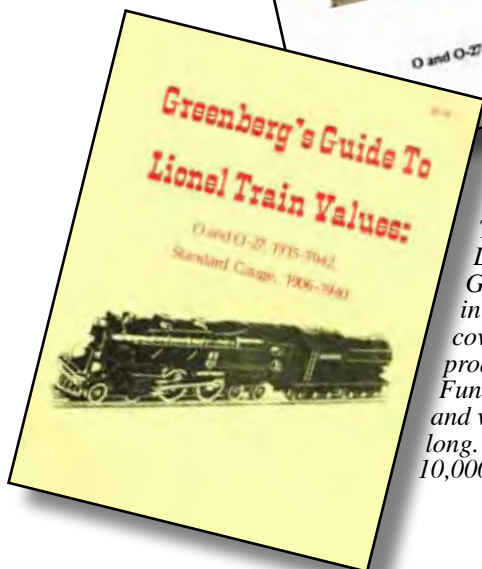


## About the Books

*The first Greenberg Lionel Prewar Guide was published in 1975 with an initial press run of 500. The book was printed on a press in Bruce Greenberg's basement.*



*The first Greenberg Lionel Postwar Guide was published in 1977. The book covered both Lionel production and MPC Fundimensions trains and was 324 pages long. The press run was 10,000.*



The Greenberg Guides were my consuming passion. I recognized from my work on my first two Guides (the Prewar Lionel Guide published in 1975 and the Postwar Lionel Guide in 1977) that my goal was to recreate Lionel and American Flyer® production records. No production records were available. Lionel and American Flyer catalogues, many of which I had already reproduced, gave production outlines although with some obvious errors. For the many items with multi-year production histories, the catalogues often did not indicate the changes that I knew existed.

To organize and understand these observed changes, I needed the active cooperation of my readers – collectors to help me report what was made and when it was made. I urged readers to send their additions and corrections. Our policy was to respond promptly to reader communication.

Initially, I received relatively little feedback, but over the years the number of contributors grew substantially. The books became more detailed and more accurate because of collector contributions and the knowledge and skill of our editors such as Roland LaVoie, Charles Weber, Chris Roling, Jim Patterson, Harwood Owings, Jack Fazenbacker, and others. Because of their detail and reliability, these books

became the standard reference works for the study of toy trains and defined the concepts and data for the field.

Why did I take this approach to our books? It reflects my interest in gathering information, organizing information, and sharing it with others. I still have a childhood diary where I systematically wrote down what I was doing by recording family events, conversations, and trips. As a boy, I had a lawn mowing business and recorded who I worked for and what I did for each customer. I also collected stamps and recorded these purchases.

Another part is organizing information; not just recording it but making sense of it. I have a great interest in this kind of work. In college, I conducted several major research projects and attempted to understand the implications of my data. After a year in law school, I decided to study political science because I wanted to understand why the political system produced certain kinds of leaders and policies. My Ph.D. dissertation involved the study of the changes in the political and social beliefs of University of Michigan college students from 1966 - 1968. I had several problems to solve in this study. The first was deciding what information to collect; the second was defining how to organize and use the information; and the third was determining how to interpret the information.

When I approached the problem of getting information about Lionel trains, I approached it within that context. I said, "Okay, I have a 726 Lionel Berkshire locomotive sitting in front of me. What information should I collect? How shall I organize and use the information? What does this information mean?"

As a student of mechanical things, I know that manufacturers make small changes and sometimes moderate changes during the course of production to solve a problem or reduce cost. So I looked for Lionel's changes on the 726 locomotive to help build a chronology of Lionel production. After we had more data, particularly after we published the second and third editions of our collector guides, I started asking, "What else can we learn from what we've already collected? What will the data tell us about this company?" We put together articles, explained the products, and further expanded our understanding of these great toys.

We could see patterns. One of the most important things observed, and one I focused on early on, was trucks and couplers. Since nearly every piece of rolling stock has two trucks and two couplers, toy train manufacturers gave special attention to coupler and truck production cost and reliability. So, we looked at and watched for changes in trucks and couplers. Sure enough, trucks and couplers became a very important part of our study of Lionel trains. The study of truck and coupler changes produced a very useful chronology of changes. This chronology in turn helped date other changes in equipment. Of course, the final goal was to link product changes to the on-going competition of Lionel,

American Flyer®, and Marx® for market share. Near the end of our book production, we started looking at toy trains in this context.

## Perspective on the Marketplace

In our books, we told our readers how we assessed toy train values. We published prices that reflected real sales in the train hobby marketplace – not the asking prices set by dealers. Some dealers grumbled about this definition; they grumble to this day. However, the more thoughtful dealers recognized that the price guides were accurate and very useful to them. With price information gathered from many train shows, the price guides became recognized as the standard reference work.

The books were also very helpful for both people selling trains to a dealer and for the dealer buying trains. The books advised sellers to expect 40% to 50% of the prices shown in the books. The books explained that the dealer buys to resell. The dealer must have enough margin to cover the real costs of operating a business and to earn a profit.

The price guides were exceedingly useful for dealers in another way. In the mid-1960s, toy trains were modestly priced collectibles. Buyers could purchase a #224 locomotive from 1938-1941 for about \$30 in 1967, a #10 Standard Gauge locomotive for \$50, and a dual-motored Standard Gauge #402 locomotive for only \$125.

But in the late 1970s and through the 1980s, trains rapidly moved up in price. In other words, there was more demand than supply and trains became more expensive. Our books helped create more demand by showing buyers what was available and reassuring buyers that the goods were worth the price. Our books created a set of shared expectations and beliefs among buyers and sellers. We priced an engine at \$200 because everyone agreed it was worth \$200. Because of our collector guides, buyers were much more confident about spending \$200 on a locomotive. Before our guides, there was no point of reference, no systematic data to support a purchase.

Some dealers were and remain unhappy to this day about our approach to pricing. But, the dealers were the beneficiaries of an organized market based on shared expectations. Dealers were also the beneficiaries of an enormous increase in knowledge about trains which gave them a market advantage as highly motivated students of train prices.

## About the Next Generation

Many people in the train world recognize the demographic imperative. There are fewer new train enthusiasts. Based on my passion and experience, I think toy trains are a great hobby and should be promoted. The dilemma is how to do it. In our market society, many products are promoted by substantial traditional media investment – through television, cable, and print advertising. Existing toy train manufactures have undoubtedly considered

such media and rejected them because they are not cost-effective. The Internet is inexpensive but not sufficient. That leaves promotion to the toy train enthusiasts. We have a great and very effective tool – the train show. It is something that each of us can contribute to in our own way.

Toy train shows feature operating layouts and impressive displays. Children see the displays and see other children enjoying them; parents see the children enjoying them. The participating club members convey their enthusiasm and love of trains very clearly to visitors. I am convinced that toy train shows are the best way to promote our hobby to the next generation; they are relatively self-sustaining and cost-efficient. Hopefully, new entrepreneurs will discover how to make money running train shows, and clubs, manufacturers, and retailers will recognize it is in their interest to participate in and support these shows.

## Current and Future Status

The current marketplace for toy trains offers the greatest selection of toy trains I have ever seen at the most competitive prices in real dollars. Never before has consumers had as large a selection as they have today from Lionel, MTH®, and other manufacturers. I just wish there were more consumers to enjoy these trains. Our fellow train enthusiasts should realize they are the beneficiaries of an extraordinary era of selection and creativity on the part of the manufacturers.

## Going beyond Trains, Shows, and Books

I have become interested in buildings, especially historic buildings that can be “recycled” and adapted to new uses. In graduate school, my wife-to-be, Linda, and I visited towns with older buildings and enjoyed learning about them. At that time, we were living in Ann Arbor, Michigan; the city had some wonderful 19th century buildings. Then we discovered a town called Marshall, Michigan, which was an hour west of Ann Arbor. It was once considered for the location for the capital of Michigan, and an anticipatory building boom occurred. However, Lansing was ultimately chosen. Marshall’s distinctive architecture remained; nothing happened to change it for about 100 years. We were intrigued and delighted to find stately homes in Greek Revival and Italian Renaissance styles.

*In 1984, the Sykesville Firehouse came with a 25-foot-wide door for access to the engine room. This door was very useful for receiving book inventory and moving train layouts in and out. After Greenberg Publishing moved to a new building in 1987, Bruce Greenberg converted the lower level of the Firehouse to retail space and added showroom windows.*





The other part of the story is my penchant for “fixing things” and making things work. I had an interest in buildings and the mechanics that make them work. When the opportunity presented itself, I bought the Firehouse in Sykesville, Maryland, which had been replaced by a much larger building. I modified the building for re-use as our office and warehouse. The offices were upstairs. Downstairs, the former engine room was both our book warehouse and our workshop for building and maintaining our traveling toy train layouts. The fun part was changing it so that it would fit our needs. I found a very skillful and knowledgeable “Mr. Fix It,” Tom Zissimos, and worked with him to change the building to make it more suitable for us. It was very satisfying.

When we outgrew that building, we purchased an office building down the street and modified it – a very interesting process. I was able to change the physical structure of the building – the way it was supported. What fun!



*The Greenberg Building and Union National Bank in 1987. Our building had a California redwood façade, and the bank had an “aluminum cheese grater” façade.*

The Sykesville office building was built about 1907 with a handsome, traditional Roman brick façade. In the late 1960s, Sykesville’s Main Street lost its traditional market function. Half of the stores were vacant. There were two reasons for this: the Maryland State Highway built a bypass around Sykesville’s three-block commercial core, and an entrepreneur built a shopping center on the nearby highway. Sykesville’s business activity rapidly declined. Building and business owners looked for ways to give new vitality to their older buildings. The traditional brick office building façade

was modernized with a California redwood finish and new dark, metal framed windows. It was different. It was the first California-style building in Sykesville, and for a brief time, it was new and attractive. A few years earlier, next door, the classic Richardsonian bank building was covered by an “aluminum cheese grater” front.



By the time I bought the office building in 1987, the California façade was dated. Furthermore, I preferred the original traditional design. After a substantial dispute with the local historic district commission, I returned the building to its original appearance. That was a big project; one of the larger projects I have undertaken. Walter Sipes was the indispensable man on this project.



*The Greenberg Building and Union National Bank in 1995 with restoration of their traditional facades.*

## Changing Times, Flexible Uses

I see the virtue of retaining some old buildings for adaptive re-use. However, I do not share the belief that all old buildings should be retained in their existing style forever. Commercial buildings need to change to reflect changing market preferences and uses.

The decisions of some communities to give a preservation commission, a non-elected board of citizens, control over the external facades of buildings regardless of the market consequences for the owners is very shortsighted and very prejudiced. The people who volunteer and are selected for these commissions usually have a religious zeal about protecting old buildings. They are not given to balancing commercial and preservation interests. They don’t understand that their rules will make “Main Street” less attractive to investors and entrepreneurs. These citizens do not have any psychic power to predict the future needs of a community. Giving non-elected government officials this power assumes that they have some special insight into what is good for a community over the long run.

If we have learned anything from our 232 years of nationhood, it is the fallibility of political leaders. If the citizens of a community want to deprive the building owner of his property rights, then they should acquire those property rights by purchase not by fiat. 🚗

*Photographs by Bruce Greenberg and Mike H. Mottler*

# My First Convention

by Ryan Fiore (age 12)  
with a little help from  
grandparents

When I was asked to go to Chicago with my grandparents (Johnny Ourso [CM 33] and his wife Fran), I expected a bunch of people who loved trains and played with trains all the time. As I walked through the hotel door, I thought, "Wow! What a bunch of odd people at a train convention. Everyone was dressed up in scary costumes." I



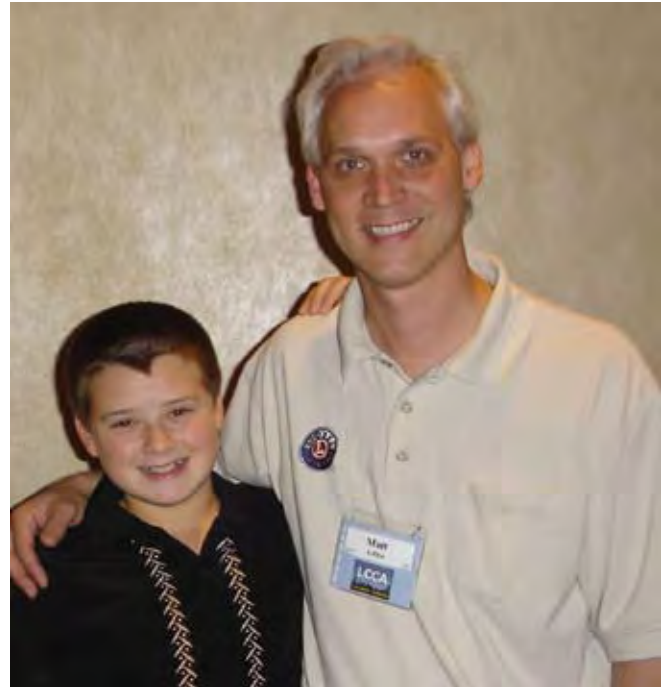
looked up and saw a banner that read "Scare Night," and then I realized it was another convention in the same hotel. For a minute, I did have a scare.

We checked into our room and from the beginning I began to meet a

lot of people with the LCCA Convention. They immediately got me involved as a volunteer. This made me feel like a true train collector.

I started by working in Registration and moved on to the LCCA Store. I assisted any way I could. I helped take trains purchased by various customers up to their rooms, and we became friends. I also met Lou Caponi, his son Dominick, and Al Kolis and his son Vincent. He and I became friends while selling raffle tickets.

For most of my time, I enjoyed looking at trains and talking to club members about their trains. I learned the art



of buying and selling trains. My grandfather gave me money to make my own purchases. I bought trains, helicopters, and model vehicles for O-gauge and O27 trains.

Here are a couple of highlights of the Convention. I had a great time at the Get Acquainted Party meeting a lot of people and having a dance-a-thon with Al Kolis. Boy was I surprised at the banquet when Lou Caponi presented a LCCA Water Tower to me. Also at the banquet I met Matt Ashba, a Lionel representative who gave me a Lionel handcar for helping out with the helicopter demonstration.

The second highlight was when I went on a tour to the Illinois Railroad Museum. My grandfather and I got to ride in the cab of the passenger train. That was awesome!

I had a great time at the LCCA Convention, and I am hoping to get to shuffle off to Buffalo this summer. Hopefully, I will see all of you there. 🚂

*Photographs by Fran Ourso*

# Toy Trunk Railroad

by Erik Sansom





# Convention Update

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

## "Do You Know the Way to Buffalo?" (and Sacramento and Denver)

We're often asked how we select a Convention site and, conversely, why other cities and venues don't make the cut. We thought it would be fun to bring you into that process and open a window on the interesting and challenging world of convention planning.

### What We Do

The annual process begins by looking for the following:

- Interesting cities – fun to explore and discover with rail-themed tour(s) available
- Accessible cities – with lots of daily direct flights from around the country as well as good highway connections
- Full service hotels – with at least 400 rooms, large exhibition space for the trading hall, and a separate ballroom for a sit-down banquet for 500
- Affordable hotels – we've worked very hard over the last 10 years to keep room rates as low as possible, especially considering that we visit major cities
- Amenities – hotels with lots of free parking, complimentary meeting and exhibition space, and a reputation for service
- Willingness to work with us – we have our own proprietary Hotel Agreement that provides significant benefits for our attendees with no yearly escalators for room rates or food costs. We'll negotiate, but not on much. Our long history of very successful conventions makes all of this possible. Every major hotel flag wants LCCA's family-oriented business
- Top flight professionals – we look for hotels with certified Convention Service Managers or Special Event Coordinators available to our team 24/7. They become our go-to folks before and during the week.
- DMCs – locally owned and operated Destination Marketing Companies with a verifiable track record of developing, planning, and executing successful week-long tour programs for large organizations like LCCA. That's one reason why our Conventions are so popular and our tour programs have won national awards. We're all about FUN!

### What We Don't Do

Based on our track record of success, there are things we don't do:

- Use Civic Centers or other separate facilities. We want everything under one roof. Renting separate facilities only increases costs for everyone

- Consider cities that have few or no direct flights and no major airport
- Eliminate from consideration cities where other train clubs have held, are, or may hold their conventions
- Change our date from the last full week in July each year
- Utilize fee-based convention planning services that extract a commission for things we can do better. Your Convention team includes a former Convention & Visitors Bureau CEO and a large association CEO who plans many meetings each year
- Utilize local "Host Committees." That requires reinventing the wheel each year with very mixed results. We utilize a skilled, semi-permanent Convention team all of whom are dedicated and committed to providing the best possible experience for members and families.

Once a city and hotel have been "targeted," your team goes to work securing a contract, usually two to three years out. Nothing is left to chance and every detail of every event, day-by-day, is carefully scrutinized and tested against the single driving idea, "What will our members think?" Finally, we are all volunteers who truly enjoy the challenge of delivering "The Best Toy Train Convention on the Planet!"

### It's Not Too Late

There's still time to "Shuffle off to Buffalo." Things are getting tight (we warned you up-front), but there are some good options. To start, put down this magazine, go to the phone, and call the Adams Mark Hotel in Buffalo right now. Hopefully, there'll still be some rooms available, but you won't know until you try.

Some tours are already sold out, but don't despair. We often have returned tickets, so when you register, let our staff know what you're looking for. If we can re-sell tour tickets, we will.

Consider some of the other tours; many are diamonds in the rough. Tour #10 has nothing to do with religion, but everything to do with great urban architecture. Our DMC says it's one of their most popular tours. Tour #4 will give you the only opportunity to see Niagara Falls lit up at night. And there's more to do at the casino than just gamble. Many tours (#5, #7, #9, #10, and #11) have no limits, so you can see all the area has to offer.



*Temple Beth Zion*

Two of the planned tours (#4 and #5) extend into Canada. Proper proof of citizenship is required when traveling into Canada during these times. **Bring your U.S. Passport** and be prepared to show it BEFORE you embark.

We'll look for you in July! 🚂



**LCCA  
38th Annual  
Convention  
2008**

Buffalo,  
New York

Niagara,  
Canada

**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 #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.

Next, it's off to the MARX® Toy Museum featuring wonderful Marx Toys such as 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

**SOLD OUT**

**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 Scenic 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 Scenic 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.

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

**SOLD OUT**

### Tour #9 - Buffalo's Best

Friday, July 25 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

\$80 per person



The Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park is a one-of-a-kind attraction in the nation. All branches of the Armed forces are represented in the 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.

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.



### 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 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.*



## Preview of a Convention Attraction



The Pittsburgh Area Hi-Railers Club will set up and operate their very impressive modular layout in the host hotel during the LCCA 2008 Convention. This group of active hobbyists was formed in March of 1998 by Thom Shepler, and the club subsequently built a large O-gauge, three-rail modular layout based on module specifications and other information from Frank E. Qualls of the DC Area Independent Hi-Railers. The club is no stranger to LCCA. They set up their modular empire for our enjoyment during

the 2002 Convention in Pittsburgh and the 2003 Convention in Las Vegas.

For the upcoming LCCA Convention in Buffalo, this club will present their awesome 16x40-foot, hi-rail modular layout with an eight-track center yard that terminates into a 36-inch turntable with a 29-track engine staging area. This energetic group continues to build modules and scenic them very realistically. 🚗

*Photographs provided by Thom Shepler*



# LCCA Product Development Shop

by Lou Caponi  
RM 8735

## It Has Arrived!

I suspect there are plenty of HAPPY MEMBERS out there who recently received their LCCA 2007 Convention Car. Our period of frustration is over, and the product speaks for itself.

If you have not received your 2007 Convention Car, please contact me ASAP at [caponilj@comcast.net](mailto:caponilj@comcast.net) or call 484-431-8524.

Thanks for your great e-mails. Here's a sample of typical messages in my inbox:

*"The C&NW/UP Heritage Unibody Tank Car may be the best club car done to date. My congratulations to all involved in its design and production."*

- NZ RM 27026

*"The outside of the shipping carton said, 'It was worth the wait.' They were correct! Fabulous car with great graphics."*

- JC RM 27715

*"Received my unibody tank car Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008. It looks GREAT. As the label on the box states, it was worth the wait. Thanks again."*

- EP RM 27699.



## Moving on to the New Haven #209

Several weeks ago I received sample pictures of the refurbished Alco A unit tooling, and I've got to tell you – Lionel® did one heck of a great job! Those who placed an order for this limited-edition train will not be disappointed. It and the add-on cars will not only meet but exceed all expectations. We promised a top-quality unique product, and that's what the recipients will get. Watch the NEWS FOR MEMBERS page of the website for the latest information about the delivery timeframe.



## 2008 Convention Cars: Two PS-2 Covered Hoppers

These cars will include the NEW STYLE ROLLER BEARING TRUCKS with matching paint, plus the latest freight car detailing. We are about halfway to our target number for placing an order for these cars with Lionel. If you haven't placed your order yet, please don't procrastinate. Every year, some members wait until after the deadline has passed, and we must reluctantly return their money with a "Sorry, you missed it" note.

All who received the C&NW/UP Tank Car fully appreciate the quality of the paint and graphics – dynamite! The samples of these two hoppers are also colorful, and the graphics are crisp. You won't believe it was possible. All regular members can order two sets.

## Looking down the Tracks

I mentioned in my last report that Lionel is manufacturing a special line of modified structures exclusively for LCCA members. One of these items will be offered to members before it's announced in the upcoming Lionel catalog. It'll be quite affordable too; priced **under \$50**. LCCA is well aware that not every member can afford \$400+ train sets and add-on cars, so the club also offers collectible goodies for every train budget.

The first of these specialty items will be produced in limited quantities and sold on a first-come, first-served basis. How about, no waiting when you place an order? When the product is announced, it will be ready for immediate shipment. You should receive the item in seven working days after the order has been processed. If our friends at Lionel will allow it, I might be able to give everyone a sneak peak of the prototype in the next issue of TLR.

Until next time, take care and happy railroading! 🚂

# A Year in the Life of a Local Train Club

by George Nelson  
RM 13073

*Editor's Note: Many LCCA members like George are also active in local train clubs with programs that "sound the horn" for the train hobby in local communities. Some clubs have permanent layouts in a clubhouse. Others – like SWARM – store their module layouts in trailers, haul them to a display site, and set up operations for the wonderment of visitors.*

Southwest Alabama is home to two modular O-gauge railroads, plus one of the largest O-gauge layouts in the South – South West Alabama Railroad Modelers (SWARM), Bay Area Railroaders (BARR) and the Foley Alabama Railroad Museum. SWARM is an "umbrella" club with about 100 members who receive a monthly newsletter published by our leader, Herb Kern. Members can attend monthly activities that interest them; typical attendance is 15 to 20 folks. They help build, maintain, haul, set-up and take-down the club's modular layout. Here's a photo diary of our activities during 2007.



## January

Met at Howard Hickey's home in Mobile.

**Photo 1** (taken in 2006)

shows Howard explaining operation of his O-gauge layout to youth

member, James Tellman. LCCA member Justin Douglass (RM 25564) is in the background.

## February

Attended the grand opening of the Foley Railroad Museum. Its 24x60-foot, professionally-built layout was donated by Alan Goldman to the city of



Foley and rebuilt in its new home adjacent to the historic Foley Depot; see **photo 2**. Volunteers with the Caboose Club operate trains from 10 to 2 three days a week – Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Four of us – David Lightsey (RM 16250), two other members, and I (plus the Caboose Club) – taught "Introduction to Model Railroading" to seven students as

part of the Eastern Shore Institute of Lifelong Learning curriculum as shown in **photo 3**.

Several of us helped The Haven, a no-kill animal shelter in Fairhope, sell a large collection of trains they received as a donation.



## March

SWARM sponsored its 15<sup>th</sup> annual Fairhope Model Train Show during the city's Annual Arts & Crafts Festival, which attracts over 200,000 visitors each year. Not all of them come to see our trains, but we have a busy show with paid

attendance averaging about 1,500.

The show includes layouts from Z to G, including



an S-gauge layout from New Orleans and the two O-gauge layouts, plus a lot of dealers. **Photo 4** shows the young women selected for the festival role of maids in the Dogwood Trail Court.

## April

Met at Herb Kern's home and saw his almost-completed HO layout. It included an active port scene reminiscent of his service in the U.S. Coast Guard. We completed the purchase of a double-axle, enclosed trailer for the SWARM layout. It was procured by a relatively new member, Bob Hillman.

## May

Eastern Shore layout tour included three HO, one N, and an O-gauge layout, plus lunch. The Eastern Shore communities involved were Fairhope, Daphne, and Spanish Fort.

## June

Attended the Pensacola Model Railroad Club annual train show. Both the SWARM and the BARR layouts participated. This was also the first outing for the new



SWARM layout skirting with Velcro attachment, made by Carol Hillman, see **photo 5**. Note the On30 interchange.





**July**  
Set up and operated SWARM and BARR O-gauge layouts as well as the Mobile Society of Model Engineers HO layout at Mobile's Colonial Mall Bel Air for a three-day weekend as shown in **photo 6**. The sign on the SWARM layout read "S. W. Alabama Lionel Rail-Roaders" and acknowledged that not all of our members are O-gaugers; however, we almost always refer to ourselves as SWARM.

**August**

Gathered for a second session at Herb Kern's home.

**September**

Met at Mike Bendik's house in Fairhope to see his Eastern Tennessee Division of the GM&O in HO scale. Mike runs his layout like a real railroad with interchanges, branch line way freight and stops along the way; all documented in the computer program he developed. Each operating session represents a day of operation. The setting for his railroad is Eastern Tennessee. Although the GM&O never ran there, he wanted a reason for making beautiful mountain scenery. The layout includes a large, out-of-sight yard representing the terminus of both the GM&O and the Southern, which serve his interchange point.

Also in September, two of us shared our trains with three sixth-grade classes at Fairhope Middle School to enhance their study of how railroads helped open up the West. This has been an annual event for several years.



**October**

We operated the SWARM layout for 10 days at the Greater Gulf States Fair in Mobile; see **photos 7**. Yes, that's me in the photo.

**November**

We operated the SWARM layout over a three-day weekend at the Alabama Pecan Festival in Tillman's Corner, just west of Mobile as shown in **photo 8**. LCCA member Charles Boyer (RM 13925) and his daughter, Jessica, are



shown in this photo. She is presented on the LCCA website as a "Junior Engineer" at the PHOTO GALLERY page.

Later that month

we set up part of the layout in Mobile's Bienville Square downtown for an evening's fun leading up to Santa lighting the Christmas tree; see **photo 9**.



**December**

Bob Hillman and Len Watkins built new modules and used Lionel® FasTrack™ to replace the aging SWARM modules and postwar O-gauge track. Wiring and scenery were not completed, but they were able to set it up and run trains at



the annual Shriner's Christmas party for children as shown in **photo 10**. We look forward to completing and operating this new layout in 2008.

Our final meeting of the year was our annual Christmas dinner, with 27 members and guests in attendance. The event was held at the Captain's Table on Mobile Causeway next to Battleship Park. While the train hobby has its own rewards, a great fringe benefit is sharing fun and friendship with others in the area who love the world's greatest hobby. 🚂

*Photographs by George Nelson*

# Servos for your Layout

by Robert H. Walker  
RM 27981

## A Brief Intro to Servos

Hobby model servomechanisms are rather remarkable devices. They are small, reliable, and lightweight. Very powerful for their size, they consume little power. They have been used extensively in model aircraft, model cars, robots, and puppets, but are seldom employed in model railroading. I believe their time is coming, and on my layout they have come of age.

Servomechanisms (“servos” for short) are small electro-mechanical devices that provide precise mechanical control at a distance using only a wire connection between the control and the action points. The usual output of a servo is the mechanical rotation of a shaft which accurately follows the preset position dialed into the servo system. In practice, the output shaft of a servo will rotationally align itself precisely with the angular input position of the servo driver control shaft.

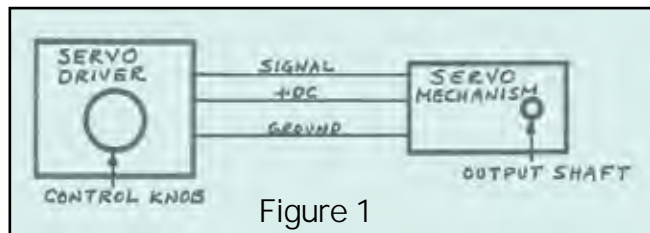


Figure 1

A servo is essentially a three terminal device as shown in **Fig. 1**. Two leads supply DC power and the third lead provides the signal feedback from the servo to the driver control circuit. It is the signal traveling on the third lead which tells the driver circuit where the servo output shaft is positioned and what power needs to be sent to the servo motor in order to correctly align the servo shaft. The feedback signal is usually in the form of pulses of varying widths which instruct the driver circuit in which direction and how far the servo motor needs to be driven.

## Using Servos on a Model Railroad

Let's explore how servos can be used to enhance model railroad operations. Since the output of a servo is a controlled shaft rotation, this movement can be used directly or – as is more common – converted to a controlled linear movement by means of either a wheel or a servo “horn” affixed to the servo output shaft – see **Fig. 2**.

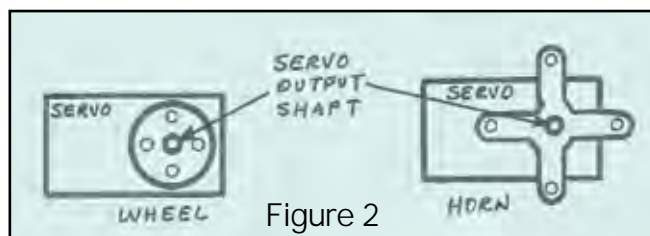


Figure 2

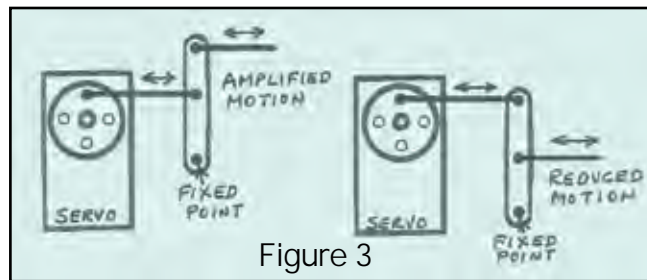


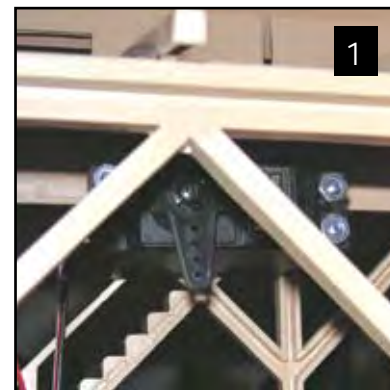
Figure 3

Linear movement can be amplified or reduced if necessary via the arrangements shown in **Fig. 3**.

At this point, let your imagination take over. Anywhere a controlled rotary or linear motion is employed in the operation of an accessory or a track component, a servo could probably be used to good advantage to make that item function in a more life-like manner.

Let me give you some examples of where I have used servos to enhance accessory operation in my layout. The Lionel® #12774 Log Loading Station has a platform onto which logs are loaded.

The platform then tilts and dumps the logs into a waiting trackside gondola. I mechanized this tilting operation by mounting a small servo under the platform and used a horn attached to the servo shaft to directly raise and lower the platform on command as shown in **photo 1**.



The Lionel #12706 Barrel Loading Platform utilizes a figure to move barrels out of a storehouse and down a chute to a waiting gondola. This moveable figure, which was originally intended to be operated manually, can easily be mechanized by mounting a servo at the rear of the loading deck structure and connecting it to the figure mechanism by means of a horn and a short plastic rod; see **photo 2**. Again, control of the barrel loader function is smooth and life-like.



Most current applications of servos such as model RC aircraft utilize radio transmitters and receivers. In these cases, the receivers provide the appropriate coded output to each servo. For model railroad layouts, a manually operated servo driver, such as the one manufactured by Custom Electronics, would be the preferred method of operation. This manual driver is a small circuit board approximately 2x1.5x1/2 inches with a potentiometer shaft. It will fit almost anywhere in a layout



control panel. The driver can be powered by batteries or by a DC power supply providing 4.8 to 6 volts. The output of the servo driver is the three-terminal signal referred to earlier which is routed to the servo by a three-conductor cable to control its actions.

Since in most layouts there will likely be more than one servo controlled by a single driver, a method of switching the driver to a specific servo is necessary. This can easily be accomplished by using a dual pole rotary switch with as many positions as you require for each servo to be controlled. I am currently using a six-position switch. Only the positive DC lead and the signal feedback lead to each servo need to be switched. The ground lead can be fixed wired to each servo in parallel as shown in **Fig. 4**.

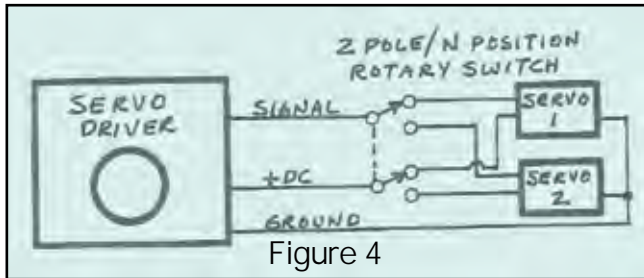
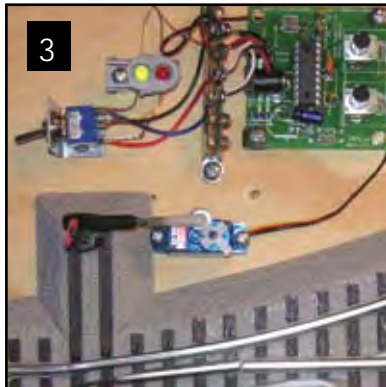


Figure 4

### Servo-controlled Switches

One very useful application of servos is to operate track switches. Adapting a Lionel FasTrack™ O36 manual switch to be operated by a servo is quite simple.

All that is necessary is to link a small servo, such as a Hi-Tek HS-55, mounted near the switch to the switch stand operating lever, shown in **photo 3**.



3

The servo to switch track stand link is made up of two RC aircraft components available at most hobby shops, a Du-Bro #229 push-rod with nylon link and a Du-Bro #

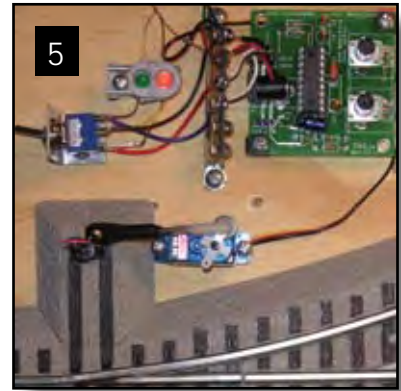


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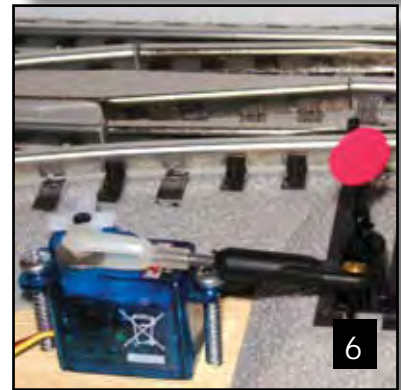
367 ball link. The push-rod is cut off just at the end of the 2-56 threaded section and screwed into the ball link; see **photo 4**. The nylon link is attached to the servo horn with a small screw and the ball link fits onto the switch stand lever. This adjustable length link will operate the switch – see **photos 5 and 6**.

For servo-operated switches, the best control configuration is to use a dual manual servo driver, such as the Robotzone 902MSD, and to switch the signal lead to the servo from one driver circuit to the other depending on which way the control panel direction switch is thrown; see **photo 5**. The dual driver circuit board is 2x2x1/2 inches

and can be mounted anywhere that is convenient. For each track switch direction, straight or curved, the individual driver circuit is then adjusted to set the switch throw in the correct position. When the control panel direction switch is thrown, the servo will smartly and smoothly change the direction of the track switch. The DC power to each of the servos in the layout can be parallel wired and left permanently connected. Servos do not change position when DC power to them is removed or restored.



5



6

Servo-controlled switch operation also allows for either a manual switch or a relay contact control of the track switch direction. When it is desirable to control more than one layout function from a single control panel switch, the relay configuration is convenient. For example, in a switching yard a single control panel switch can route power to a siding, turn on a siding “power on” light, and set the appropriate switches to lead to that siding. This is by far the most creative use of servos in a layout.

### Servos for All

In Robert Schleicher’s 2006 book about Lionel FasTrack™, he included many layouts with a large number of switches. In layouts like these, the relay and servo-controlled track switch arrangement can be utilized to good advantage. The economics of a single servo driver feeding multiple servo-operated switches works out nicely in favor of the servo approach for layouts with many switches.

Servos are available in an amazing assortment of sizes and power capabilities. There are micro servos which are less than 3/4-inch in length all the way up to much larger servos which could probably move a locomotive. Every time I review my layout, I come up with a new way to adapt a servo in some area.

Thanks to the advances in modern electronic circuitry and manufacturing, many innovations have made an impact in the model railroading hobby. We can certainly add servomechanisms to this list. Servos are relatively inexpensive and uncomplicated for what they can accomplish and you might just have a lot of fun experimenting with ways to enhance the operation of your layout through the use of these magical little workhorses. 🚂

*Figures and photographs by Robert H. Walker*

# Lionel News & Views

by Bill Schmeelk  
RM 6643

## Product Review I: Complete Your Collection

Today it seems everything is going digital. In previous issues, we reviewed the digital archive of *O Gauge Railroading* magazine and *Toy Trains* magazine. Both of these were presented by Hybrid Systems Ltd., Inc., a company run by club member John Holtmann (RM 27042). His latest release is one that should have a wide appeal among Lionel® fans – an archive of Lionel catalogs. This first release in what John hopes will be a continuing series, features Lionel catalogs from the postwar era, 1945 to 1969.

When John initially mentioned the idea of putting such an archive together, I felt it would be a worthwhile project. Here in one package is a complete set of Lionel's consumer catalogs. Through the use of his own collection along with contributions from others, John has been able to gather a complete set of Lionel's original consumer catalogs. Each catalog has been scanned and meticulously cleaned to provide like-new catalog images. You can view each page of the catalogs individually, or see the two-page spreads together. This is especially handy since many of Lionel's catalog illustrations crossed the center spine.

## Rare Catalogs and More

Through the generosity of several collectors, this archive includes scans of some very rare Lionel paper. Lionel's four-page 1945 flyer is one example. Not only is there a scan from an original copy, there is a scan of an earlier version of this flyer which includes several typos that Lionel corrected in a second printing. Both versions are

included. Another hard-to-find catalog is the 1950 "Sorry" catalog. This was a two-color catalog with an apology on the front cover. It was sent out when the supply of four-color catalogs was exhausted. Both the four-color version and the two-color version are included. They are actually quite different. The two-color version was almost identical to the advance catalog distributed to dealers earlier in the year. An original of this catalog alone would cost several times the price of this entire archive.

In addition to the regular consumer catalogs, John has scanned the accessory catalogs that were included in sets. The archive includes

11 of these. Though often overlooked because of their lack of color they deserve a closer look. These catalogs were printed before the color catalogs, because they needed to be packed in the sets being produced. Often, they include



illustrations from the dealer advance catalogs. These illustrations were often made before the design of a new product was finalized. You'll find it interesting to see earlier designs that do not closely match the final product. I find it interesting to see how the design of some of Lionel's product developed,



from the concept drawing to the actual production design. Because these catalogs were often printed on pulp paper, age has caused them to deteriorate and the pages of surviving catalogs are often torn and brown. The scans included in this archive are cleaner than you'll ever see on the real thing. John has made the effort and spent considerable time to clean these images to a point where they are superior to the original, darkened copies. This digital media is an excellent method of preservation.

The archive also includes the 1953 and 1954 color mini catalogs that Lionel produced. Lionel's four separate HO catalogs are also included along with many of the brochures Lionel produced for their Spear, Lionel-Porter, and Science product.

There's also a bonus section which includes three Lionel publications, the 1944 *Lionel Railroad Planning Book*, the 1945 *Plans and Blueprints for Lionel Model Railroaders* book, and the 1950 *The Magic of Lionel MagneTraction* booklet. Also in this section are scans of 13 different catalog envelopes from 1946 to 1966.

I must admit that I was somewhat excited to see that this project was being done. After seeing how well the initial scans looked, I offered to write an introduction which John has included. Titled, *A Colorful Reflection of Lionel's History*, this takes you through a brief history, year by year, of Lionel's postwar period.

### A Powerful Research Tool

Even if you already have a collection of these catalogs, the digital archive provides a useful and handy way to browse the catalogs. I've already found it useful in researching my article about Lionel's Milk Cars for inclusion in the June 2008 issue of *The Lion Roars*. If you're familiar with any of John's previous archives, the navigation is much the same. In the Table of Contents section, you can search for sets, locomotives, and major catalog sections – click the link and you're in the catalog at the right page. The navigation technology allows you to jump from a page on one catalog to a similar page in the next or previous catalog. For example, you can easily jump from cover to cover or from the rolling stock section of one catalog to the same section in the next or prior catalog. These features make the archive particularly useful for research.

### Its Time Has Come

Having such quick and easy access to Lionel's postwar catalogs is very convenient. Since receiving this archive I have already had several occasions where I wanted to check out a particular item. Having it all in one place made it convenient to quickly obtain the information I was looking for. The software allows you to print any page and

the navigation tools allow fast and easy access to the entire archive. The archive is contained on one CD and it is compatible with either a PC or a Mac. The disk even includes two sets of files so that you can choose the best size for the monitor you have on your computer. This is an officially licensed Lionel product. The price is \$50 plus \$5 for shipping and handling. You can order it directly from John at his website, [www.hsline.com](http://www.hsline.com) or by calling 800-779-2802 (toll free). Depending on the success of this project, John has plans to expand this series to include catalogs from the prewar and modern eras.

### Product Review II: Fixing Can Be Fun

Part of the fun of operating your trains is the problem solving involved. Building, operating, and maintaining a train layout involves a multitude of skills, and there is no single source for guidance. While there have certainly been many books and articles dealing with the wide variety of topics involved, there's always more to be learned. New technology adds to the bank of knowledge required.

Sometimes the best way to learn new techniques is to have someone sitting next to you showing you just what to do. *OGR* offers a series of DVDs that provides the next best thing.

Long-time LCCA member Jim Barrett (RM 1755) is an associate editor for *O Gauge Railroading* magazine and is well known to readers of that magazine for his many technical contributions. Jim has a lot of experience in running and repairing trains. His "Backshop Letters" column has been a feature in that magazine for many years and is



a favorite for those who have questions about operating, repairing and maintaining their trains. Several years ago, Jim began a series of videos to actually demonstrate repair and maintenance techniques. The *Jim Barrett in the Backshop* video series is now up to volume 11. When this series began it was offered on VHS



O GAUGE™  
RAIL-ROADING  
Barrett  
in the  
Backshop  
8

format; now each of the volumes is also available on DVD.

I recently purchased one of the DVDs. After watching it, I felt compelled to purchase more of them. I consider myself pretty competent mechanically but found it very helpful to watch someone actually performing the task being explained. Each of the videos covers four or five topics. The first one I watched dealt with Lionel's 364 Conveyor Lumber Loader. The discussion begins with Jim demonstrating the accessory. While Jim runs it, we hear the all too familiar loud growling sound of the motor. Jim also measured the voltage required to operate it at 15 volts, and the current draw at 2 amps. Jim explains what the problems are and demonstrates in detail how to go about fixing it. The accessory is completely disassembled, including the motor and gear box. You know how much I enjoy disassembling things for these LN&V articles!

While disassembling something so thoroughly might be a bit disarming, Jim is quite thorough in his explanations and anyone who is capable of using a screwdriver should have no problem following his instructions. Just as important is that


you see the re-assembly process in the same detail. Actually watching the process being done is certainly a confidence builder.

I was quite surprised to hear how much quieter the motor was and how much less power was required to operate it. Once the entire process was complete, the accessory required only 10 volts and drew less than one-half amp. Quite a dramatic improvement! As Jim points out, that is probably better than when the accessory was new.

With 11 volumes available, there's quite a variety of topics. My personal favorites were those dealing with postwar Lionel trains and accessories. Volume 9 had a very useful topic on refurbishing a postwar Lionel loco. Although the techniques shown were applicable to many of Lionel's locos, a 2046 was used in the demonstration. This loco has the spur-type motor. In the first scene, Jim showed an old, dingy-looking loco. By the time he was finished, it looked near new and operated well. After watching this, I was eager to dig out my very first Lionel loco – a No. 665 Hudson with a spur-type motor.

For those who are likewise inspired, one of the topics covered details setting up your workshop for train repair. Some of the projects involved making something useful. On Volume 8, Jim demonstrated the construction of a fast-acting circuit-breaker box. This works with all transformers and protects your trains. Most built-in transformer circuit breakers are designed to protect the transformer, not the trains. What you'll appreciate is that whenever a part is required, you're given the source, catalog number, and all the details you'll need to duplicate exactly what Jim is doing.

The videos are available in either VHS or DVD format. They sell for \$19.95 each plus shipping. There are more topics than I can list, but you can see them all on their website. You can order by phone at 800-980-6477, or online at [www.ogaugerr.com](http://www.ogaugerr.com). If you happen to see Jim at the OGR magazine booth at a train meet, be sure to say hello. He's as friendly in person as he is on the videos.

In the next issue, we'll take a look at the evolution of one of Lionel's most popular items – the Operating Milk Car. The latest model has some interesting features. 

*Photographs provided by HSL and OGR*

E-mail Bill at: [bill@wellingtonent.com](mailto:bill@wellingtonent.com)



## You'll Want to Become a Member of the "Lionel Nation"

by Erol Gurcan  
RM 26800

### Forget Lionelville — It's Time To Join the Lionel Nation

In March, our friends at TM Books and Video® released their "Lionel Nation" DVD. Among toy train enthusiasts, TM is best known for their highly popular "I Love Toy Trains" video series. The success of that series derives from its appeal to both young kids and young-at-heart toy train enthusiasts because of its charm, occasional silly humor, and the toe-tapping music of Jim Coffey.

"Lionel Nation" is similar to the "I Love" series in that it is narrated by Jeff McComas. However, this time he narrates only part of the show. Other segments are narrated by TM Founder and President Tom McComas, as well as Co-director/Co-producer Joe Stachler. The title song is performed by Jim Coffey; however, there is less music and singing in "Lionel Nation" than "ILTT." The DVD benefits from great train videography that has always been a hallmark of TM videos.

"While 'Lionel Nation' is for Lionel® enthusiasts, it is structured in such a way that it can be enjoyed by the casual observer," stated Mr. McComas. He added, "So I hope it strikes that delicate balance — meaty enough to capture the enthusiast yet entertaining enough to interest and even fascinate the casual viewer."

The DVD is essentially a toy train video magazine that has something for every Lionel fan: trains old and new, history, layouts tips, and more trains. Moreover, it provides the added benefit of showing the trains in action and allowing one to hear their sounds, something that can not be duplicated in a print magazine.

One of my favorite segments involved a historical look at Lionel's efforts to bring sound to its locomotives, beginning in the 1930s and continuing to the recently released Union Pacific Big Boy with state-of-the-art Railsounds 5.0. That locomotive was also the first locomotive to operate with Lionel's new Legacy™ remote control system (which was reviewed in the recent February issue of *TLR*). The video and audio portions of this particular segment demonstrated different attempts at sound systems through the years by the company. Most Lionel experts will learn something from this portion of the show that they did not know before. I did!

Another part of the DVD I found very interesting was entitled "Locomotives Then and Now." This portion

demonstrated the differences in how some of our favorite locomotives looked many years ago, compared with today's current models with many details and truer-to-scale proportions. Featured were the New York Central's Dreyfus Hudson, Pennsylvania Railroad's GG-1, Milwaukee Road's Hiawatha, the Norfolk and Western's J, and Santa Fe's F-3 units. This part of the program will bring back memories for many older Lionel fans.

Of course, no magazine, whether in print or video formats, would be complete without a couple of train layouts. "Lionel Nation" does not disappoint. It features of the layouts of Dr. Michael Theodorakis and Chuck Brasher. Dr. Theodorakis' layout was built by Clarke Dunham Studios. It was made to fit in a small space and create the illusion that it is bigger than it really is. Mr. Brasher's layout is all standard gauge.


If you are a standard gauge fan and/or collector, the DVD also has a segment on the large layout and collection of noted hobbyist Thomas Sefton. It was donated to the California State Railroad Museum after his death in 2004 and is now on permanent display at that facility in Sacramento — which LCCA Convention-goers will visit in 2009.

There is also a "Layout Tips" segment about how to add a line to a small layout.

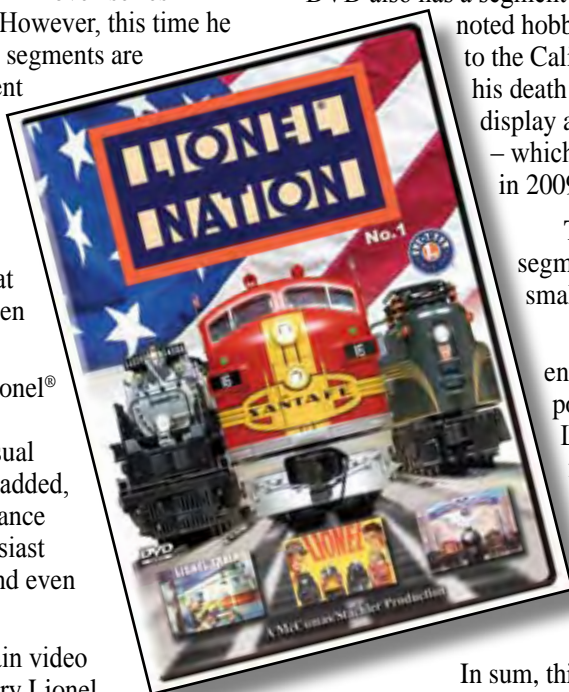
The DVD closes with a segment entitled "Lionel in New York." This portion shows the small layouts in Lionel's NYC office, the layout featured in Grand Central Terminal over the past three holiday seasons, and the Lionel exhibit at Macy's Santa Land located at Herald Square (34<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue) in Manhattan.

In sum, this is a great program packed with fascinating segments for the Lionel expert and novice. I loved it! I expect that it will become a permanent part of the video library of many Lionel enthusiasts. Lionel lovers will also occasionally refer to it as a valuable source of historical information, especially in the "Sounds of Lionel" and "Locomotives Then and Now" segments. Moreover, it entertains in addition to providing interesting information about our favorite train company. The videography is first rate, and the recorded sounds of the various locomotives are dead-on.

There were a couple of references in the DVD that this is part one of a new series. Let's hope that it will be successful enough to warrant future episodes.

The DVD runs just over 60 minutes and features all new, never-before-seen footage. It can be purchased for \$20 at many local hobby stores or ordered directly from TM at 1-800-892-2822. 

*Photograph provided by TM Books & Video*



# The Tinsplate Cannoball

by Ken Morgan  
RM 12231

## Budget Classics – Part 3

Don't you just love sequels? A few more installments of "Budget Classics" and The Tinsplate Cannonball will be right up there with Rambo and Rocky. Speaking of which, can you identify Rocky's best friend? Warning: don't go for an easy answer.

### All about the #318

Budget classic loco number three is the #318. The number doesn't make any sense, but it sure is a nice loco. It's the smallest of the classic period S-types, but it captures the basic appearance very nicely. See **photo 1**, which shows a pair of #318s. The pea green one is original; the light brown one is not. More about that later.

Like all Lionel® standard gauge motors, it's got four wheels. Obviously, Lionel didn't follow the wheel pattern of the NYC prototype. Even the #318's big brothers, the #402 and #408, don't have the correct number of wheels, although they double it to eight – using two separate motor assemblies to do so. They're closer to the 12-inch-to-the-foot version, but they are really 0-4+4-0s, not 2-8-2s like NYC's.

So where does the #318 fit in Lionel's catalogs? If you go back about three issues of *TLR*, there is a picture of the #8, #10, and #318. Each loco is a bit bigger and each has a bit more brass trim. Also, Lionel charged more for each. Today's collectors' market cares much more about color and quality. The prices for each overlap. In general, I'd say that all other things being equal and sticking to the common colors, the current order of dollar value is #10, #8, and #318

with the #318 a notch up on the other two. But the difference is minimal, so assuming you're at a meet, it's more a matter of which seller wants to deal or which locos are there in greater numbers.

Personally, I like all of them, but the pea green #318 in **photo 2** is probably my favorite of the ones rostered by the BCC&PRR. The color and condition certainly contribute to that. This loco is all original except for the wheels and wiring. As I have mentioned before, both often need to be replaced if you plan to operate. As on the #10, the brass trim on the cab sides with the door, windows, and number plates, is all one piece inserted in place from the inside. Similarly, each triple ventilator grill is a single piece, which is shown in **photo 6**, but I'll come back to that later.



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### Chronology of this Loco

The #318 was catalogued from 1924 through 1932; the #318E from 1926 through 1935. The #318 came in dark gray, mohave, gray, pea green, and state brown (a specific shade of light brown so-called because it was used on the massive #412 series passenger cars). The E version came in mohave, gray, pea green, black, and state brown. In both cases, the state brown version came with or without a cream bead on the bottom. They are all in the same basic price range today except for the state brown and black versions.

The #318 was more often catalogued with a passenger set, but it also headed some freights. In its first year (1924), it had three passenger cars: two #319 coaches and a #322

1





observation car. These are the same car bodies as the #309/#312 which eventually replaced them in the catalogs. These passenger cars were both slightly bigger and more expensive than those accompanying the #8 and #10. The set had eight curved and six straight tracks and was \$33 east of

the Mississippi, \$40 west. While there was no freight set in 1924, when it included freight cars later on, the #318 came with the same series of cars as the #8 and #10.

By 1927, the catalog showed a pretty pea green set with a consist of #309/#310/#312 coach/baggage/observation cars for \$30.75 or \$37 with an E-unit (the pendulum unit described in the previous installment, not the familiar pawl unit). There was also a freight set, with six #500 series cars and two more straight tracks. Hey, that's a long train! It listed at \$32.25 with a hand reverse, \$38.50 with the E-unit.

The 1930 catalog showed what collectors now call "the baby state set." It is another very attractive set, with a state brown loco and the #309/#310/#312 passenger cars. All are shown in state brown with dark brown roofs – even the #318. The cars are correct, but as far as I know the loco never had a dark brown roof. The set was available with E-unit only for \$38.75. There was no freight set shown.

By 1933, the same set, shown correctly without a dark roof on the engine, was down to \$19.50. Probably a much better investment than was available on the stock market back then. The set is well into four figures now. The other rare version is the black one. This is even more expensive today. It was available in 1929



only and came as a coal train. It had three #516 cars with gold rubber stamped data, which was not there on most other hoppers, and a red #517 caboose with a black roof and orange windows. The loco and caboose were only available with this set, hence the rarity and today's high price.

### Back to the Pictures

**Photo 3** shows both my #318s from the

front. Note the brass rail coming down from the top. That's a fancier piece than on the two smaller locos. Now look at two other features: the headlight and the coupler. The green loco has a transition coupler; hence, it's early production – likely 1927. The brown loco has what is called a strap headlight, rather than the cast one seen on the green engine. That, too, indicates early production. The transition coupler was there to mate with the early cars with drop hook couplers. That's what the slot is for. The strap headlight, with minor changes over the years, was installed on nearly all early locos. So why doesn't the brown one have a transition coupler? Because it's a repainted loco.

### About Repainted Trains

Let me go deeper into this. I bought this piece many years ago, and, no, the seller didn't say anything about the fact that it was restored, nor was it identified in accordance with TCA standards. I assumed it was a nice clean original.





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I have since learned lots more about Lionel tinplate trains in general and this loco in particular during my self-taught education at “Lionel University.”

When I first started looking closer at the brown #318, partly to see just what it was, I already knew it was a relatively desirable color. I also knew it had a “#318” plate, but had a remote control reverse unit. So it really should have had a #318E plate, but Lionel sometimes made a mistake with the plates, or stamped the “E” on the cab side.

This awareness emerged years after I bought it, and I looked more closely since I wanted to see just what I had. As per the *Greenberg Price Guide* I had then, the loco should have had a cast headlamp and cream painted ventilators and window frames, and probably also red lettering on the plates; which this unit does not have. **See photo 4.** I now have both more references with more complete sources. The body of information available grows all the time, and Greenberg, among others, periodically provides new editions. I find them worth the price – more for the identification updates than for the new pricing info. Suffice it to say, nothing in the new guides has changed my mind about this being a repaint.

### Digging into the Details

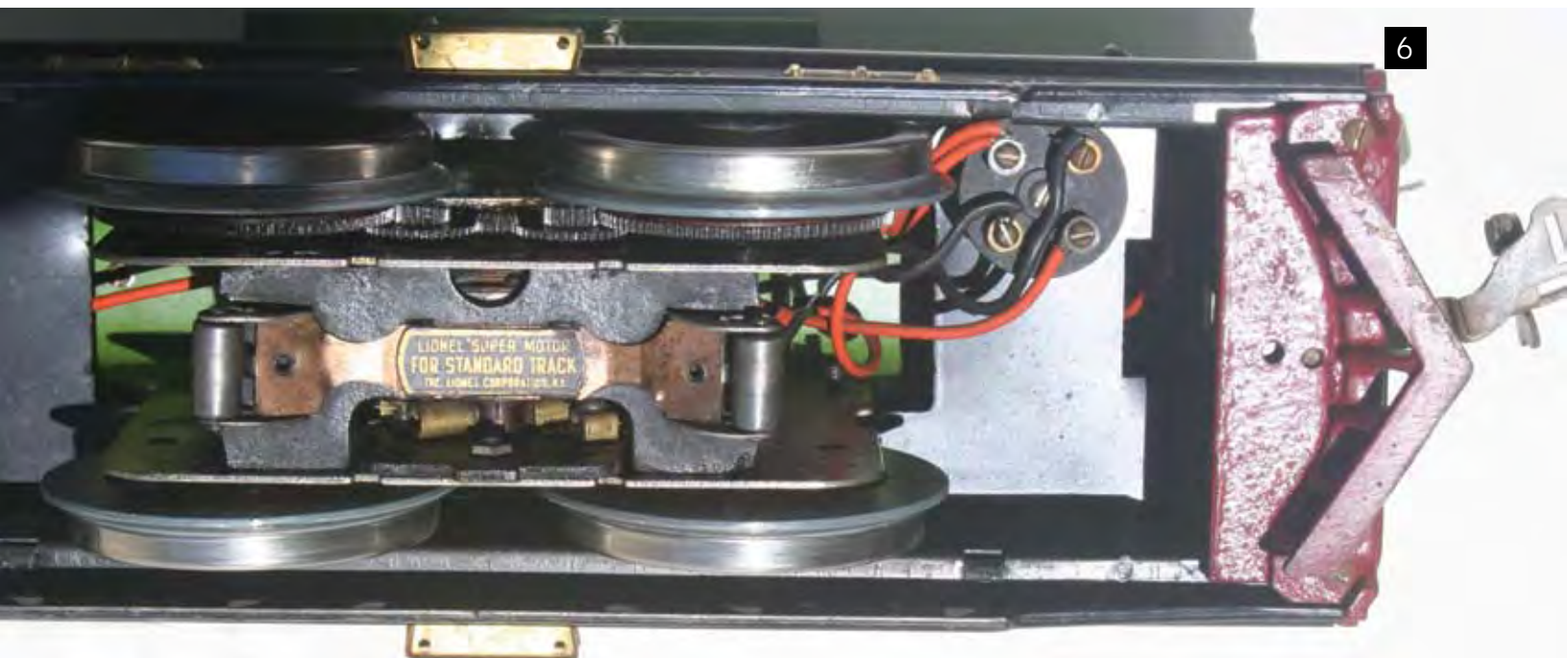
Other indications are more difficult to see, but they are there. When I determined that this was a restored loco, I decided to install a hand reverse unit to replace the e-unit it came with. At least that would be closer to correct. **Photo 5** shows some of what I found inside, and it reconfirmed my

conclusion. Look at the tabs holding the door on the left and the brass ventilator on the top. They are twisted, not bent flat. Lionel always bends them flat. Restorers often twist them because the tabs are less likely to break off. One is, in fact, broken off at the other end of the loco. Also, look at the headlamp, or rather, the lumps of solder holding the remnants of the tabs in place. These, too, would have been bent over or twisted by Lionel. But they are more brittle than the brass tabs, so they were broken in the process of stripping the engine for restoration. Hence, the solder. I presume the brittle metal is the reason why I have also seen some locos made by Lionel with twisted as opposed to bent tabs; which is all I have ever seen for the trim and other body parts.

On this particular loco, these things are a little tough to see without disassembly, which only involves the usual two screws at the ends. But that’s likely more than you’ll do at a meet, at least for low-priced locos like this. See **photo 6** which shows the hand reverse unit in the green loco, and it also shows why you need to look closely to see some of what I just described.

As an aside, it also shows the wires I previously discussed in TPC. The two black ones are connected to the brushes, and the red leads are from the pickup and to ground (the second red lead on the screw closer to the wheel is the “hot” lead from the pickup to both headlamps). Color coding makes it easier to keep things in order. Lionel didn’t do this back then. I do now.





## Knowledge Is Power


Back to the repainted items. So what do you do? Well, educate yourself. And I hope my TPC columns can help you there. Look for all clues. Like I said, the headlight/coupler combination was wrong. The transition coupler lasted longer than the strap headlight, so the green one is good; the brown one is suspect on that alone. When possible, look inside. Check the position of the tabs, and whether or not they show signs of missing paint. Lionel mastered the art of folding them over. I know it can be done with restorations, but in many cases, some tabs are either missing or show signs of paint loss due to the bending process. Particularly as you move up into more pricey items (whether for basic upscale, like a #408, or for color, such as the black #318E, which is quite rare), I strongly advise taking a close look, especially if you are not familiar with the seller. I don't mean to cast aspersions on the vast majority of reputable hobbyists, but there a few bad apples in the barrel. Same advice goes for postwar stuff. I have seen several articles dealing with

chemically altered colors, etc. I don't want to scare you. I'm just saying, "Be careful;" especially if the price doesn't match the item or if it's not a common color, etc.

## Truth in Labeling

So do I still like my brown #318? Sure. Runs fine. I have enjoyed it for years. I have marked it with a tag identifying it as restored; so whether I or my heirs ever sell it, the buyer will know. Would I have bought the pea green one if the brown one was an original? Maybe, maybe not. But it is awfully nice looking!

Answer to the trivia. I bet I gotcha here. I meant Rocky the Flying Squirrel of TV cartoon fame; you probably thought I was asking about Rocky, the Philadelphia boxer, in the movies. So the answer is, Bullwinkle the Moose. Saturday morning TV used to be so great!

See you next issue with some more classic standard gauge. 

*Photographs by Ken Morgan*

## Upcoming Train Show

LCCA will sponsor a train show in the Chattanooga (TN) area on Saturday, October 25, 2008, in the Catoosa Colonnade on Old Mill Road in Ringgold, GA. The host will be Bill Stitt, with co-hosts George Baltz and Ron Herman.

Directions: I-75 exit 350 (5 miles south of Tennessee state line), west on GA H'way 2 (Battlefield Parkway). Go 1.6 miles to third light west of I-75, then turn right on Old Mill Road to the Catoosa Colonnade.

Details: Dealer set-up and registration: 8 to 9 a.m. LCCA member trading 9 to 10 a.m. Public and guests: 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. closing. Tables sold to LCCA members only – advance table registrations are requested.

Register early – tables will be assigned as payments are received. Make checks payable to "LCCA" and send to: Bill Stitt, 9727 Shadow Valley Circle, Chattanooga, TN 37421.

Rates: Registration for LCCA Member – \$4

Registration for LCCA Member, with 1 table – \$17; additional table(s) at \$13 ea.

Spouse/friend, kids under 18 of member admitted free


Adult non-member guests \$6; their children under 18 admitted free.

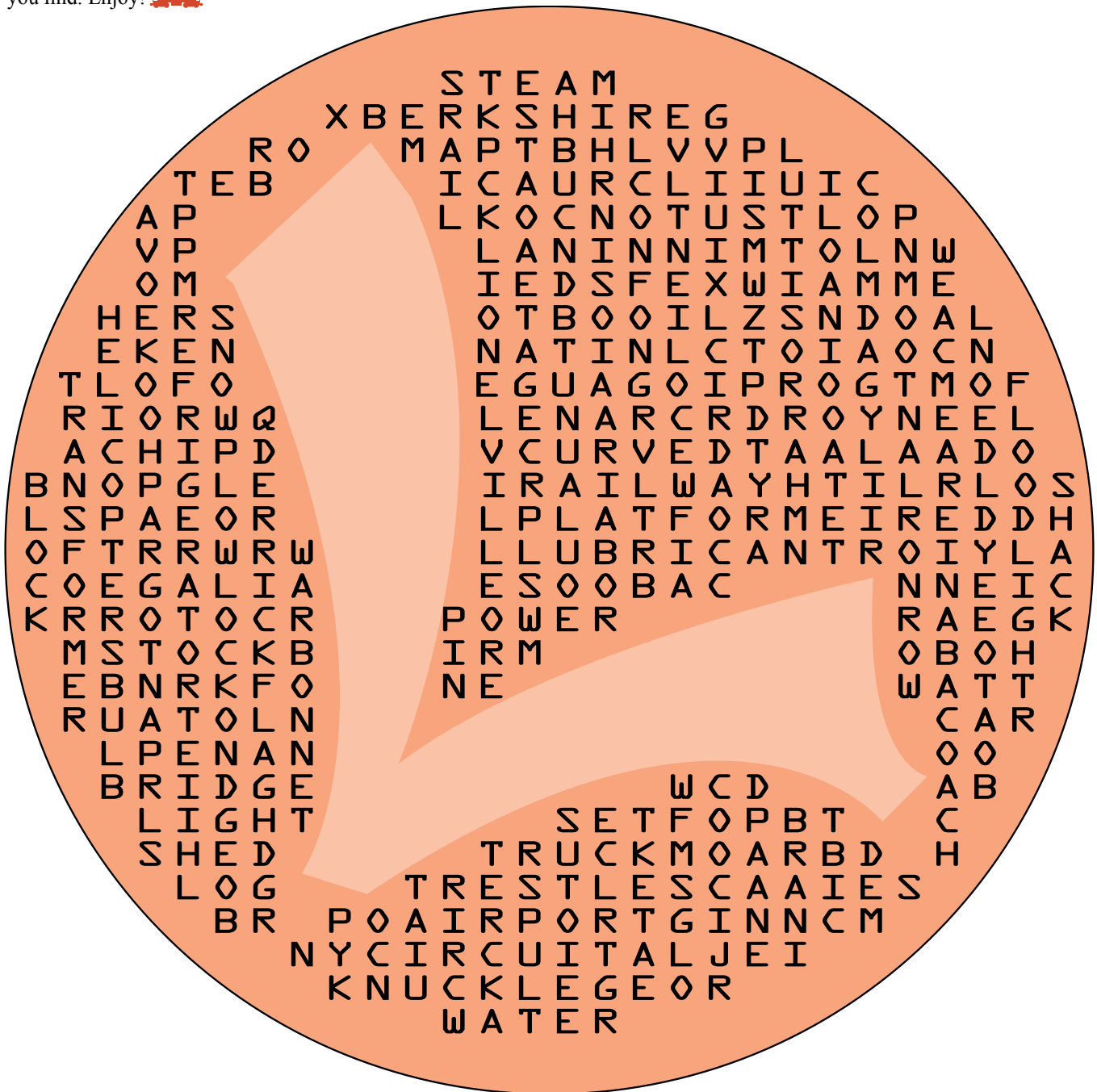
For info and reservations by phone, call: 423-894-1284, or 423-842-6094, or 423-344-5799.

# A Lionel Puzzlement

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

## Lionel Word Search

Contained within the "word art" of the Lionel emblem are 80 words familiar to Lionel enthusiasts. Look for them horizontally, vertically, and diagonally – several are backwards but always in a straight line. Circle each one that you find.  Enjoy!



Answers are published in TLR... somewhere.



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

<b>Sunday, July 20</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Registration Desk open	Noon – 7 p.m.	
Board of Directors Meeting	2 – 9 p.m.	Adam's Mark Hotel
<b>Monday, July 21</b>		
Registration Desk open	7 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #1: Niagara History on the Rails	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	BBQ Lunch
<b>Tuesday, July 22</b>		
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
<b>Wednesday, July 23</b>		
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
<b>Thursday, July 24</b>		
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
<b>Friday, July 25</b>		
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
<b>Saturday, July 26</b>		
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	
<b>Sunday, July 27</b>		
Trading Hall take-down	9 a.m. – Noon	For Exhibitors only

Safe Travel Home! See you in Sacramento – July 2009