

The Waybill



Issued by the Texas Gulf Division of the Lone Star Region, National Model Railroad Association, Inc.

The Prez sez...

The Hill Country Special convention in Round Rock was great! If you did not go, you missed out on a good one. See Tracy Mitchell's convention report on page 4 for details.

The Division will hold a General Membership Meeting at Papa Ben's Train Place in Houston on July 28, 2007, at 10:00 a.m.

Tracy has a great show in store for all who come, so be there. Also, Peter Bryan is looking for some good or new operators - and some old ones - to participate in the "Operations Day" event. Turn to page 3 for details.

And finally, to all of you who support your Division, thanks for that support. May we all keep a good thing going.!

*Ray Byer
Division 8 President*

Future delivery of *The Waybill*

This is the last *Waybill* that will be sent out as a general mailing to Division 8 members. Unless you have made other arrangements (see page 2); future *Waybills* will be sent via email. This is the result of changes to the national and regional dues structures. The newsletter is also posted on the Division 8 Web site: www.kingswayrc.com/division8/

This issue will be emailed to all members who have supplied email addresses to the NMRA; if you did not receive this issue by email, your email address is not up-to-date in the NMRA's records. The Division does NOT maintain the membership list and email data; updates and corrections should be mailed to NMRA headquarters or emailed to nmrahq@aol.com.



Waybill - the primary written documentation of every freight shipment that forms the basis for railroad freight revenue accounts.
(Comprehensive Railroad Dictionary, Second Edition)

On the waybill: coil steel

Two Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad coil cars await forwarding to their destination in Houston's Englewood Yard on May 12, 2007.

IHB's Senior Director of Sales, Marketing and Customer Service Jim Sheppard tells *The Waybill*, "Glad to see two of our newer coil cars making the rounds. This series of 200 cars was just placed in service in May 2006. These were built in Texas. As information, IHB handled approximately 35,000 loads of coil steel in 2006." *Photo by Tom Marsh*

Around the Division

Division 8 Foremen and members: Please email club updates and articles to info@houstonrrmuseum.org.

DIVISION 8 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

A Division 8 General Membership Meeting will be held Saturday, July 28, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. at Papa Ben's Train Place, 2506 South Blvd., Houston, Texas 77098.

The Annual Business Meeting will be held Oct. 13, 2007, at Zube Park from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more Around the Division, see page 2

The Waybill

Issued quarterly by Texas Gulf Division (Division 8) of the Lone Star Region, National Model Railroad Association.

Editor: Tom Marsh

How to receive *The Waybill*

LSR Division 8 members can receive *The Waybill* free by email or through the US Postal Service for \$6/year. To sign up for the electronic edition, send an email to info@houstonrrmuseum.org. To receive the newsletter by mail, send your name and mailing address along with \$6 to *The Waybill*, 8502 Sharpcrest St., Houston, TX 77036. Make checks payable to the Division.

NMRA members who do not live in the Division 8 counties can receive *The Waybill* by email by requesting delivery as indicated above. Please provide your NMRA membership number and club affiliation (if any) when making your request.

Submissions to *The Waybill*

The Waybill is your newsletter. Division 8 Members, Division Foremen, Club Presidents and others are encouraged to submit articles, club news, photos and other items of interest for publication. Email submissions to info@houstonrrmuseum.org. If you do not have access to email, you can mail your submissions to *The Waybill*, 8502 Sharpcrest St., Houston, TX 77036.

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Around the Division from Page 1

Division 8 Treasurer's Report

Checking Account	\$4,884.88
Petty Cash	40.00
Total	\$4,924.88

All bills paid and deposits recorded.

- Submitted by Peter Bryan

Welcome aboard new members!

The Waybill welcomes the following new Division 8 members:

- John Bailey
- Gary Danford
- Richard Disbrow
- Jordan Fischman
- Richard Gardner
- John Giraud
- Larry Jacobsen
- Jay Jones
- Matthew Roberts
- Garrett Schmidt
- Tim Schmidt
- Robert Singleton
- Jonette Walker

Constitution changes approved

The Division 8 board on May 5, 2007, approved the new Texas Gulf Division Constitution. A copy is enclosed with this newsletter, and it can also be downloaded from the new Division 8 web site: <http://www.kingswayrc.com/division8/>

The major change to the constitution was replacing the word "dues" with the word "fees" in order to bring the constitution in line with recent changes in the NMRA national dues structure. Jim Long made the motion

and Ray Byer seconded to change the constitution as needed. After some discussion, the board of directors voted to approve the changes. Division officers signed and dated a copy of the changes.

Division 8 distributes new brochures to promote clubs

New brochures titled "Model Railroading in the Houston Area" are being distributed to Houston-area hobby shops. Featuring all-new artwork, the guide to model railroad clubs in the Houston area is organized alphabetically and includes 19 organizations.

Every effort was made to provide the most up-to-date information possible, but not every club responded to multiple requests for information. In some cases the information is based on an organization's web site. Any corrections or updates should be emailed to: info@houstonrrmuseum.org

We will reprint additional brochures with any corrections and updates submitted before the fall layout tours begin.

Club reports

None received, although as the N'Crowd's Division 8 Foreman, your editor can report that the layout under construction upstairs at Papa Ben's Train Place is progressing nicely: Stop by for a visit!

Division 8 launches new site on the World Wide Web

To facilitate distribution of Division 8 documents, newsletters, meeting minutes and other information, we have launched a new Web site:

www.kingswayrc.com/division8/

In general, *The Waybill*, meeting minutes and other relevant documents and information will be posted to the site within a week after they are received. Email relevant contributions to info@houstonrrmuseum.org.

Let's operate!

by Peter Bryan

OK ladies and gentlemen, get ready for a fun half day of operations on some of the Houston area's best known and fun model railroads!

The date is Aug. 11 from noon to 5 p.m. or so. You will be able to operate on Gil and Virginia Freitag's Stony Creek & Western, Don and Bettye Bozman's Great Great Northern, Peter and Susan Bryan's West Virginia Western, and others.

This Division 8 Operations Day is mainly for those of you who are new to operations or have always wanted to operate, but for whatever reason have not been able to. We of course will accept all that want to participate, but for the new people this will be an excellent chance to try out operations in a very relaxed setting and maybe get on the "extra board" on a regular basis.

You DO NOT have to know anything about operations and waybills. We will teach you as you go. It really is a lot of fun and you should try it. It will add a whole new dimension to your model railroading skills and be another way to enjoy the hobby.

At each railroad, we will have "mentors" that will guide you through all there is to know about operations from how to uncouple to timetables to throttle use to the use of switch lists and car cards. You will be able to run passenger trains, way freights, through trains, locals and even run a yard if you want. There will also be dispatching positions available for those of you that are adventurous!

To get a head start you might want to consider joining the NMRA's Special Interest Group for Operations (OP SIG) The OP SIG group publishes a quarterly magazine with all kinds of interesting stories and articles from basic operations to advanced with real life information from prototype railroads. It is a great group to belong to if you have even a casual interest in operations. You can contact the group at www.opsig.org. The cost is only \$15 a year.

So what do you need to bring to

these sessions? Nothing except a willingness to have a fun day with fellow model railroaders and operators. We will be able to accept the first 35 operators that sign up. Do not miss this fun Division 8 event for Division 8 members ONLY.

To sign up or you have questions, simply email Peter Bryan at peterb@pdq.net or call me at 713-939-8002. You will get your choice of railroads on a first come- first serve basis. Don't wait too long as I expect these spots to go fast.

Modeling with the Division 8 Masters set for July 28

A day of clinics is scheduled for Saturday, July 28, at Papa Ben's Train Place in conjunction with the Division 8 membership meeting. The Modeling with the Division 8 Masters starts at 10 a.m., and will feature two clinics, one in the morning session and the other in the afternoon. There will be a short break for lunch between the two presentations.

Up first is Tracy Mitchell MMR. He will be giving a "How To" clinic on "Modeling Tools from A to Z." Tracy is a nationally known clinician and modeler, having given several seminars at national narrow gauge, O scale and N scale conventions, as well as regional and national NMRA conventions. Tracy will talk about the modeling tools, some commercial and some home made, that he uses for building his award winning models. This is the debut of Tracy's newest presentation, so be the first on your block to catch it!

The afternoon session on "Scenery" will be presented starting at 1 p.m. by Loren Neufeld MMR. Loren is no stranger to us, having given numerous clinics in the area as well. He is noted as a scenery man, having created scenery for the Grimy Gulch modular layout, as well as several other layouts in the Houston area including those of Harry Daniel and Jim Lemmond. Loren's clinic will include scenery design concepts and techniques for easy, attractive scenery. If you're looking for good tips on mastering scenery, don't miss Loren's clinic.

This is one time you don't have to attend the NMRA National Convention to see clinicians of this caliber! The Division is planning more "Modeling with the Masters" clinics for later in the year; watch *The Waybill* for information on dates and clinic topics.

Something ‘Special’ in the Hill Country

Story and photos by Tracy Mitchell MMR

Division 4 presented “The Hill Country Special” in Round Rock from June 6-10. On paper, this LSR Convention had the makings of one of the best conventions in recent years. I am happy to report that it lived up to and surpassed all expectations. This one had a little of something for everyone!

You wanted prototype tours, you had them. In fact, there were two good ones, I was told. The first was a visit to two sawmills in the Bastrop area. One mill employed a husk saw (circular saw) and the other used a band saw. I heard the first tour was the better of the two. Also I was told the bus trip was worth the price of admission: NOT!

The second tour was to the LCRA coal fired electric generating plant. I was told the bus ride for this was much better than the ride to the sawmill.

You wanted a train ride, we had that, too. Before we boarded the train at Cedar Park we picked up a box lunch and cold drink. I did not opt for the AC lounge car upgrade, and rode in the non-air conditioned coach. It really wasn’t too bad where I sat. I was on the last car and the breeze from the end platform coupled with the open windows made the outbound trip quite enjoyable.

The trip back was a different story. When they turned the train the end car then became the front car, and we were treated to diesel heat, smoke and the loud horn interrupting the conversation we were trying to have. All in all it was a very fun time on the train, even though the trip back wasn’t as enjoyable.

You wanted clinics, well we had more than have ever been attempted at an LSR Convention. Chuck Wilson, the convention clinic chair, wanted to have more Master Model Railroaders (MMRs) giving clinics than the total amount that San Antonio had at last year’s convention. I was very concerned about the turnout for each clinic. I know several of



UP cooling tower by “Van” Vanderwilt.

us talked about it beforehand, thinking that we would be lucky to have five attend a clinic. With the exception of the Wednesday night clinics, most had an average of 15 or so attendees. I know mine had an average of 20. The few others that I saw were well attended.

Several Division 8 members gave clinics: I gave two, one I tag teamed with Duane Richardson from Dallas. It was pretty neat badgering him on the highlights of styrene while Duane talked about working with wood. The other one I gave was on Laser Cut kits. It too was great fun, even with a manufacturer of laser kits in the audience. Of course he was trying to say that laser cutting had no faults, and I would point out that they do, and describe to him what they were. He had no answers for my comments, and I felt good about that.

Steve Sandifer MMR gave one on LCL and Bill Reid did a couple on airbrushing. Both of these were SRO. George Werner did a couple, one on cabooses and the other on Texas Railfanning.



Award-winning machine shop and pile driver by Division 8 member Kenneth Ehlers.



Steve Barkley, the guru of Digitrax and DCC, gave one on DCC for dummies and another on Signaling. Kenneth Ehlers MMR did a great job on digital model photography.

Bob Barnett did one on mail trains, while Greg Johnson talked about valve manufacturing. Gil Freitag MMR did one in MS PowerPoint, yes you read it right, PowerPoint. It was on 40 years on his Stony Creek and Western. Kelly Russell did one on rail operations at refineries. Jim Hinds was there with the latest on LEDs.

Don Bozman did two as well. One was on the GGN from the cab of an F unit and the other was on the TCH layout. And finally Chuck Lind MMR did one on scratchbuilding with wood. This group alone would have been a great group of clinicians, but they were only the Division 8 presenters. All told, we had 50 clinics given by 35 presenters. Not bad at all.

You wanted drama, we had that in the contest room. Division 8 came home with several awards. Kelly Russell took first place in Traction and Others with his trackmobile. “Van” Vanderwilt took first place in On Line Structures with his UP Ogden, Utah, coaling tower. He really impressed the attendees when they found out he was 81 years old. I hope I can do work like that when I am his age.

I took first place in Offline Structures with my two-story outhouse. Kenneth Ehlers took First place in MOW with his RGS pile driver and he also took First place in Display with his Machine Shop.

Division 8 also did well in the major award department. Loren Neufeld received the Bob Clarke best logging award for his creek outhouse, and he took home the tree award for his tree and outhouse display. Loren also took the bronze and silver corncob award for the 2nd and 3rd place outhouse awards. While we are on outhouses, I took the gold corncob award for 1st place in outhouses.

The youth and Linda Little (female in the contest) award went to Ray Byer’s granddaughter Rayana for her laser cut shed.

Finally, the most popular award went to Kenneth Ehlers’ Machine Shop. The Best in Show went to Kenneth Ehlers RGS Pile Driver. All-in-all, the division should be very proud of its award-winning members, this was a contest filled with quality and quantity.

You wanted narrow gauge? We had a keynote speaker from a narrow gauge family. Margaret Coel’s grandfather and father both worked on narrow gauge railroads in Colorado. She gave a



Outhouses galore at the 2007 LSR convention.

PowerPoint presentation showing photos from her family. Some of these have not been in publication and it was a real treat for this Narrow Minded person to see photos I haven't seen before. She even showed DSP&P way cars (caboose) and Tiffany Reefers.

I was hoping she would settle the debate for us narrow gaugers about what color the way cars were painted, white, cream, or pale yellow. No one alive today really knows for sure. It would have been nice to see if she showed a photo of the Plaid Tiffany reefer too, but alas she didn't (inside joke to the NGers of the Division). Still, it was a great talk at the banquet.

And speaking of the banquet, Loren Neufeld and Kelly Russell put together a fine presentation for the 2008 Houston Convention. They did it like a press conference and several of us were throwing out questions. It was a novel idea, and from what I heard it was well-received.

I heard few complaints about the convention, other than the elevator in the convention center stuck a couple of times, and the hotel had no bar or restaurant. The bar situation was quickly taken care of; on Wednesday night, the convention staff supplied



free beer and wine. The rest of the nights you could find several of us beside the pool with coolers in tow. The best comment I heard coming from those poolside sessions came from David Davis of Dallas. He said this will be the first time his bar tab will be less than his hotel bill! All-in-all a good time was had by all.

Texas Gulf Division, we are up next. We better get busy to even come close to what Round Rock offered. Bob Alston and his staff raised the bar for future conventions.

So you want to run DCC?

by Ray Byer

So you want to run DCC on your layout?

Among the first things to ask yourself are do you have a layout and how well does it run on DC, and in the future, do you want to have signals?

So, do you have a layout? If you do not, then you are in the planning stage, the cheapest stage to be in.

You will need a good track plan of your dream layout, as the plan will serve various purposes. Drawing the plan out is the best way, then you can plan towns, sidings and industries for the railroad. You can plan your electrical busses, feeders and drops, and determine your track, switch and switch machine needs. With plan in hand, you can set a budget for the railroad. This is important because good planning here can and will save your marriage or girlfriend.

With planning complete, it's time to build. This is not the time to go cheap. The lumber you use will be with you for the rest of your layout life. Spend some time in picking out the lumber. If you pick boards with knot holes or low-quality, cheap boards, then your train will be falling off the layout. Your track work depends on a good base. DCC can not fix this problem.

You have built your bench work and started laying the track out and nailing it down. You need to check your work as you go, put the power to it, see how it runs, by putting DC to the rails. That's right, I said DC, not DCC. If your train will not run on DC, then it will not run on DCC. A short is a short, if there is an electrical problem now in DC, than it will be a bigger problem in DCC. If you make a reverse loop in DC and it does not work well, how do you think that a DCC auto reverse unit will do?

Once your layout run well on DC, then it is time to add a DCC system too your layout. You should

have most of the bugs worked out of your layout; put on your DCC engine, then your next one and enjoy watching them run around the layout.

If you have taken your time in building your layout, it will run as good as you built it. Run your layout for some time before you start with adding the trees, houses, the cars and all that other stuff. That way it is easier to fix things when they do go wrong. There is no feeling in the world like taking out the town that you worked on for six months because you have to fix a simple problem.

Make sure that you read your DCC manual completely. Reading it now will help you in the long run. Most of the problems I have seen can be fixed by looking at the system manuals, or by calling a friend who has the same system.

This brings up a good point: If you are not familiar with the system that you wish to buy, then run on a friend's layout that has the system you are thinking about buying. Ask him his likes and dislikes about the system before you buy one. This will save you money in the long run and friends may be able to help you when you have a problem.

The best system in the world can be the biggest piece of junk. If you cannot get help when you need it the most, then what good is it? Play with as many systems as you can before you commit to buying one. Check with your local hobby stores to see how well they know DCC and if they will be able to help you when you are having trouble.

I hope I have helped in some way. DCC can be the best thing you have ever done to your layout or the biggest piece of you-know-what in the world. By taking your time, it will help you in the long run. The fun of running many trains at the same time is priceless. That is why I like DCC.

Next time I will go into decoders.

SP society to meet in Houston

submitted by Tom Cobb

The annual convention of the Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society returns to Texas this fall. Houston will host this gathering of SP/T&NO aficionados at the Westchase Hilton Hotel Oct. 10-13, 2007.

This marks the second time Houston has been privileged to host this convention and the headquarters hotel is the same location of the very successful convention in 1996. Nonmembers are welcome to register, and of course the society encourages you to join.

Among the outside activities planned are visits to 16 Houston area layouts, representing a variety of scales and eras. Programs promise to meet the expectations of the most discriminating railroad modeler and historian. The convention programming promises to be skewed toward coverage of Texas & New Orleans subjects.

At this writing, the program consists of the following blockbuster presentations: Joe McMillan on the T&NO in South Texas; Lee Gautreaux with an SP Freight Car Overview; Tony Thompson on the T&NO Freight Car Fleet; Louis Saillard on Rebuilding MK-5 #745; Al Partlow covering T&NO Post-War Passenger Operations; Mike Palmieri on SP Louisiana Branch Lines; Jeff Cauthen on The Overland Limited; Joe Strapac with T&NO Diesels; Steve Sandifer tackles Livestock Movement and the Meat Packing Industry; Joe Dale Morris looks at T&NO in the Transition Era; and Mike Spoor and Tom Palmer reprise their Modeling PFE Wood Refrigerator Cars.

The banquet speaker will be Art Henson, former SP superintendent of the San Antonio Division. He will be introduced by his friend and former SP General Manager Rollin Bredenberg. Other convention activities will include an Old Timers panel, plus model and photo contests, members' swap meet, vendors, and ladies activities. More information can be found on the Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society Web page: www.sphtsannualmeeting.org. Other inquires can be addressed to Tom Cobb at: tecobb@academicplanet.com

Join the Division and LSR Yahoo! Groups

Division 8 has a Yahoo! Group for exchanging news and information. The group can be found at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TGD8_LSR_NMRA

To join, point your browser to the URL and click on "Join this Group"

LSR also has a Yahoo! Group. It can be found at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LSR_NMRA

Division 8 Time Table Events of Interest

July 21-22: San Antonio Model Railroad Association Balcones Heights Family Train Show, Crossroads Convention Center

July 22-28: NMRA National Convention, Detroit, Mich.

July 28: Division 8 General Membership Meeting, 10 a.m. at Papa Ben's Train Place, 2506 South Blvd., Houston, featuring "Modeling with the Masters"

Aug. 11: Division 8 Ops Day

Aug. 18: Waybill deadline

Aug. 18: 14th Annual New Braunfels Summer Model Train Show, New Braunfels Civic Center

Sept. 15-16: 25th Annual Temple Model Train Show, Frank Mayborn Convention Center, Temple

Sept. TBA: Modeling with the Masters

Oct. 10-13: SPH&TS Annual Convention, Westchase Hilton

Oct. 13: Division 8 Annual Business Meeting, 10 a.m. at Zube Park, 17400 Roberts Rd., Hockley

Nov. 10-11: 23rd Annual Ft. Worth Train Show, Will Rogers Memorial Center, Ft. Worth

Nov. 17: Waybill deadline

2008

Jan. 19-20: 23rd Annual Dallas Area Train Show, Plano Centre, Plano

June 18-22: LSR 57th Annual Convention hosted by Division 8. [Have you volunteered?](#)