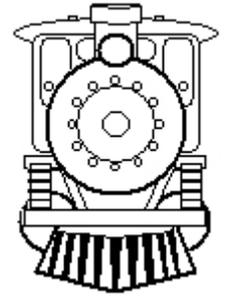


The Waybill



October - November, 2008

The Official Newsletter of the South Jersey S-Gaugers

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Annual Christmas Party for December 12th

by Michael McConnell

Our December meeting is traditionally a time for members to gather and enjoy refreshments and share train stories. This year will be no different, other than we will be meeting on the SECOND Friday of the month due to Stratford's use of the facilities on our normal meeting night.

There is quite an assortment of food items that members have already committed to bringing; hot casseroles, genuine Hobo Stew, Hot Roast Beef, cakes, pies, cookies, and other Holiday treats.

We are also planning to hold a member's raffle like we did last year. John Aaron will be our auctioneer and he's done a memorable job of hawking various items brought in by members before. We will do the same thing this year, with a share of the proceeds going to our new layout fund. We will also have time for you to show off your latest projects, so bring 'em along. And there will be a loop of track set up for those who want to run their not-yet-wrapped Christmas presents before they go under the tree (yes, Virginia, there's always a train under the Christmas tree).

Also, don't forget your annual membership dues are due by the end of the month! This meeting would be a good time to pay up - especially with the new club policy of charging an extra five dollars for renewing late. If you can't make the meeting - then please be sure to drop a check in the mail to Joe Balcer.

See Ya'll then - and remember it's the SECOND Friday!!

Next club meetings:

Friday, December 12 at 7:30 pm

Friday, January 02 at 7:30 pm

South Jersey S-Gaugers - Club Officers

President

Hank Worrell

Vice-President

Greg Berndtson

Secretary

Steve Politowski

Treasurer

Joe Balcer

Asst-Treasurer

Jim Oliver

Newsletter Editor - Michael McConnell

WebSite - www.trainweb.org/sjsg

SJSG Minutes

October 3, 2008
Stratford Senior Center



The South Jersey S Gaugers convened at the Stratford Senior Center. The meeting was called to order by President Hank Worrell at 7:30pm.

Members Present (19)

John Aaron, Joe Balcer, Greg Berndtson, Tom Burns, Hal Farlow, Ray Farrell, Bob Foster Sr., Jerry Mackey, Mike McConnell, Walt Mumie, Mike Packi, Ken Palmer, Steve Politowski, Joe Rascone, Ron Schon, Art Turner, Rick Wark, Hank Worrell.

Guests Present: none

The September '08 meeting minutes were read to those in attendance. **Ken Palmer** made a motion to accept the minutes with a second by **Hal Farlow**, Vote: Minutes accepted

Committee Reports

Treasurer

The Treasurer's report was read by Joe Balcer with a motion to accept by **Michael McConnell** and seconded by **Mike Packi**. Vote: Report accepted.

Layout - Joe Balcer, G. Berndtson

The Old layout has been cleaned up, inventoried and a sale brochure by Joe Balcer has been drawn up. A repo saw mill was obtained off EBay by **Ken Palmer** to be placed on the old layout. Work on the new layout continues as long as the Riverton space is available. Check your email

for dates and times. The club will display the old layout until the Ocean City Show in December.

History - Steve Politowski spoke of the beginnings of the Camden and Amboy RR and the granite "sleeper" rock used to hold the rails during the C & A's early history.

By-laws - No report.

Trips - none scheduled

Play Trains - Work on the layout

Old Business

As always **Michael McConnell** can't get enough articles and photos for the Waybill which are always greatly appreciated, send 'em to msmconn@Comcast.net.

**NOTE the following change of the regularly scheduled meeting date of December 5th to December 12th.

The club is planning to display the layout at the Yellin School, Warwick and Vasar Sts., Magnolia, NJ to benefit The Magnolia Historical Society on Saturday Nov. 22nd. Set-up is on Friday night.

The club is also scheduled for a layout display at the Collingswood First Baptist Church at Frasier and Maple Ave, (one block off Haddon Ave) in Collingswood on Nov 29.

Hank Worrell updated the club on the Lakewood, NJ "O" Club with the tax problem noted in the August minutes. "The issue has been resolved and the tax burden rescinded."

New Business

Hank showed members a plaque from the Bristol S Gauge Club along with a very classy letter thanking us for displaying our layout at the convention. The recognition was much appreciated by the membership.

John Aaron also commented that E Bay will be accepting only Pay Pal as a form of payment and to list sales some time this October.

Please report changes in address, phone or email address to **Hank Worrell** as soon as possible.

Hank Worrell mentioned that the Washington Union Station celebrated its Centennial Celebration.

Nominations for club President and Assistant Treasurer (two year terms beginning in January '09) were presented: **Hank Worrell** was nominated for President by **Ken Palmer** with a second by **Ray Farrell**. **Ken Palmer** was then nominated for Asst. Treasurer by **Tom Burns** with a second coming from **Rick Wark**.

Hank Worrell then closed the nominations.

Clinics

Hal Farlow volunteered an LED lighting clinic for November.

The December clinic will be the annual holiday Hobo pot-luck dinner with auction to follow. **John Aaron** will be swinging the auctioneer's gavel. Bring a clean tin can for your Hobo Stew skillfully prepared by Chef Hobo Aaron.

Anyone wishing to put-on a clinic in the future on any hobby related topic contact Michael McConnell.

A motion to adjourn came at 8:10 PM by **Jerry Mackey** and seconded by **Tom McDowell**. Motion accepted.

Respectfully Submitted
Steve Politowski

Acting Secretary

SJSG Minutes

November 7, 2008
Stratford Senior Center



The South Jersey S Gaugers joined at the Stratford Senior Center. The meeting was called to order by President Hank Worrell at 7:30pm.

Members Present (20)

John Aaron, Joe Balcer, Greg Berndtson, Larry Diemunsch, Tom Burns, Hal Farlow, Ray Farrell, Bob Foster Sr., Robert Gallagher, Peter Grout, Mike McConnell, Tom McDowell, Mike Packi, Ken Palmer, Steve Politowski, Joe Rascone, Joe Sullivan, Art Turner, Rick Wark, Hank Worrell.

Guests Present: Todd Roman

The October'08 meeting minutes were read by those in attendance. **Bob Gallagher** made a motion to accept the minutes with a second by **Ken Palmer**, Vote: Minutes accepted

Committee Reports

Treasurer

The Treasurer's report was read by Joe Balcer with a motion to accept by **Tom Burns** and seconded by **Hal Farlow**. Vote: Report accepted.

Layout - **Joe Balcer, G. Berndtson**

Greg stated that the new layout is at 605 Main Street, Riverton, NJ with the city background and Union Station scenes being worked on. Also optional sections are being made and worked on. Ideas for the setting and

scenery are being entertained. Check your email for work dates and times. The club will display the old layout until the Ocean City Show in December.

If you have signed-up to help at a show and find that you can not make it, please notify Hank ASAP.

History - Steve Politowski

Steve lead a moment of silence for our veterans and spoke of the Camden and Amboy RR along with a couple of "firsts" for the line. The C & A operated the first steam engine, the John Bull, to be used in the states and the first containerized loads. Stay tuned for more firsts on the C&A.

Trips

The annual Strasburg, Pa. trek, to take in the Toy Train Museum, the PA RR Museum and a ride on the Strasburg RR for lunch will be Dec. 31st with a 7:30 AM start at the Country House Restaurant in Woodbury, NJ

Clinics

Hal Farlow along with guest **Todd Roman** put on an LED lighting clinic following the meeting.

The December clinic will be the annual holiday Hobo pot-luck dinner with auction to follow. **John Aaron** will be swinging the auctioneer's gavel. Bring a clean tin can for your Hobo Stew skillfully prepared by Chef Hobo Aaron. Hank made auction description slips available and stated that auction items need not be train related.

The January clinic on realistic bottle brush trees will be by **John Aaron**.

The February clinic on detail casting will be put on by **Greg Berndtson**.

Anyone wishing to put-on a clinic in the future on any hobby related topic contact **Greg Berndtson**

Play Trains - none scheduled

Old Business

Michael McConnell is always looking for articles and photos for the Waybill which are greatly appreciated! Send 'em to: msmcconn@Comcast.net.

**NOTE the following change of the regularly scheduled meeting date of December 5th to December 12th.

The club displayed the layout at the Yellin School, Warwick and Vasar Sts., Stratford, NJ as part of a benefit. Hank thanked all who helped with the set-up and display.

The next display will be Nov. 22 Magnolia Show to benefit the Magnolia Historical Society with a set-up Friday night and display from 9:00 AM to 4 :00 PM on Saturday..

The club is also scheduled for a layout display at the Collingswood First Baptist Church at Frasier and Maple Av., (one block off Haddon Av.) in Collingswood on November 29 as part of a community event. Set-up is Friday Nov. 28 with a 9:00 AM to 4:00PM display on Saturday.

Please report changes in address, phone or email address to Hank as soon as possible.

Hank was nominated for a consecutive two year term as President while Ken Palmer is nominated as Assistant Treasurer.

New Business

The NASG is seeking help at the Worlds Greatest Hobby Show on tour in Oaks, PA January 3 & 4, 2009, the club also is also seeking help with display of the layout for the show. Notify Hank ASAP if you can help.

Play Trains is being devoted to layout work in Riverton, NJ on Tuesday and Wednesday nights, check your email for dates and time.

Other News

Bob Gallagher mentioned that there will be a German Christmas Village show in Dilworth Plaza, Center City Philadelphia from Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve.

Michael McConnell also mentioned that November was National Open House Month for train layouts, more info can be found on:

www.modelrailroadopenhouse.com

Hank Worrell made note to check out the History Channel for *Extreme Trains*, 8 shows, @ 10:00 PM Tuesday nights starting Nov. 11th.

Fred Jester is having an open house at Yanks. Anyone with more info on this please mention at next meeting.

A motion to adjourn came at 8:45 PM by **Tom McDowell** and seconded by **Tom Burns**. Motion accepted.

Respectfully Submitted
Steve Politowski

Secretary

2008 SJSG Meeting Notice

(please make a note!)

The meeting date for December is changed due to holiday use of the Senior Hall by Stratford Borough.

December meeting will be held Friday, December 12, 2008. (The SECOND FRIDAY.)



TRAIN SHOWS 12/6 to 4/5/09

Submitted by Hank Worrell

Sat. 12/6- Ocean City, NJ \$ 3.00
Music Pier 10 am to 5 pm

Sun. 12/7- Ocean City, NJ \$ 3.00
Music Pier 11 am to 4 pm

Sun. 12/7- Gilbertsville, PA \$ 3.00
Fire Hall "Original" 8:30 am to 1:30 pm

Sun. 12/7- New Hope, PA \$ 4.00
Eagle Fire Hall 8 am to 12 pm

Sat. 12/13- King of Prussia, PA \$ 7.00
Greenberg's Train and Toy Show
Valley Forge Conv. Ctr. 10 am to 4 pm

Sun. 12/14- King of Prussia, PA \$ 7.00
Greenberg's Train and Toy Show
Valley Forge Conv. Ctr. 10 am to 4 pm

Sat. 12/20- Montvale, NJ \$ 6.00
St. Joe's High School 10 am to 4 pm

Sat. 12/20- Williamstown, NJ \$ 3.00
Pfeiffer Comm. Ctr. 9 am to 3 pm

Sat. 12/20- Tuckahoe, NJ \$ 5.00
Upper Twp.Com.Ctr. 8:30am to 4pm

Sun. 12/21- Tuckahoe, NJ \$ 5.00
Upper Twp.Com.Ctr 9 am to 2 pm

Sun. 12/21- Montvale, NJ \$ 6.00
St. Joe's High School 10 am to 4 pm

Sun. 12/28- Wayne, NJ \$ 5.00
P.A.L. Hall 9 am to 2 pm

Sat. 1/3/09- Oaks, PA \$10.00
World's Greatest Hobby on Tour
Greater Phila. Expo Ctr. 10 am to 6 pm

Sun. 1/4/09- Oaks, PA \$10.00
World's Greatest Hobby on Tour
Greater Phila. Expo Ctr. 10 am to 5 pm

Sun. 1/4/09- New Hope, PA \$ 4.00
Eagle Fire Hall 8 am to 12 pm

Sun. 1/11/09- Brooklawn, NJ \$ 4.00
American Legion # 72 10 am to 3 pm

Sun. 1/11/09- Philadelphia, PA \$ 5.00
Atlantic Division TCA
Plumbers Hall 9 am to 12:30 pm

Sat. 1/17/09- Allentown, PA \$ 5.00
GLV Train Meet "Scale"
Merchants Sq. Mall 10 am to 4 pm

Sun. 1/18/09- Allentown, PA \$ 5.00
GLV Train Meet "Tin Plate"
Merchants Sq. Mall 10 am to 3 pm

Sun. 2/1/09- New Hope, PA \$ 4.00
Eagle Fire Hall 8 am to 12 pm

Sat. 2/21/09- Allentown, PA \$ 6.00
ATMA Spring Thaw
Allentown Fairgrounds 9 am to 4 pm

Sun. 2/22/09- Allentown, PA \$ 6.00
ATMA Spring Thaw
Allentown Fairgrounds 9 am to 3 pm

Sun. 3/1/09- New Hope, PA \$ 4.00
Eagle Fire Hall 8 am to 12 pm

Sun. 3/1/09- Wilmington, DE \$ 4.00
Nur Temple 8 am to 1 pm

Sun. 3/8/09- Philadelphia, PA \$ 5.00
Atlantic Division TCA
Plumbers Hall 9 am to 12:30 pm

Sat. 3/14- Hartley, DE \$ 3.00
Fire Hall 9 am to 3 pm

Sat. 3/14/09- Edison, NJ \$ 7.00
Greenberg's Train and Toy Show
NJ Expo Center 10 am to 4 pm

Sun. 3/15/09- Edison, NJ \$ 7.00
Greenberg's Train and Toy Show
NJ Expo Center 10 am to 4 pm

Sun. 3/15/09- Gilbertsville, PA \$ 3.00
Fire Hall "Original" 8:30 am to 1:30 pm

Sun. 4/5/09- Leesport, PA \$ 4.00
Farmers Market 9 am to 2 pm

Sun. 4/5/09- New Hope, PA \$ 4.00
Eagle Fire Hall 8 am to 12 pm

Shows in bold = SJSG Layout Display



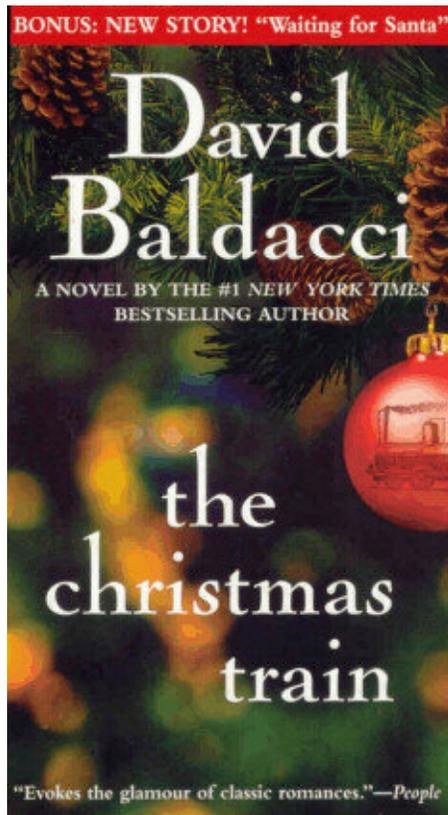
THE CHRISTMAS TRAIN

A Book Review by John Aaron

Conductors call packed out trains “heavy trains.” This is especially true of trains that ply the rails on Christmas eve and Christmas day. This is because many people, who would otherwise find themselves alone at the holidays, ride long distance passenger trains just to be in the company of others.

Traveling by train means communal dining, bathing, and sleeping that is semi private at best. Everyone melds into a family. It doesn’t take long before one drops their inhibitions and you find yourself wandering the aisles in your jammys. Singing Christmas carols in the club car on Christmas eve, and Christmas day dinner in the diner, beats being alone. Often passengers who ride the same trains every year even bring along gifts to exchange with their rail riding friends. At some station stops choirs come aboard to further entertain. And, of course, Santa never fails to pay a visit.

David Baldacci’s book, *THE CHRISTMAS TRAIN*, brought back many memories of my own rail travels. If you’ve ever been curious about long distance train travel jump on board this trip from Washington, D.C. to Los Angeles. Every character in his book matches similar folks I have traveled with. All the regulars are on board, from the retired railroad employees who now ride on their own dime because they’re addicted to the train, to eccentric millionaires, movie stars, card sharks, lawmen with prisoners in tow, retirees seeing the country, military personal, college students, and honeymooners. In one section of the book a wedding takes place on the train. Made up? I’ve seen several over the years. David Baldacci gets these rail travelers spot on. In case you were wondering, rail conductors can not perform weddings



as ship captains can. Clergy or magistrates are brought on board in route.

Being the author of ten consecutive *NEW YORK TIMES* best sellers got Baldacci full cooperation from AMTRAK and he was all over the equipment from the cab seats to the toilet seats! You could throw the story out and use this book as a technical manual on passenger equipment maintenance and train operations. I did not know, for instance, that it takes more fuel to shut a diesel down and restart it, than to leave it in slow idle for twelve hours. He put in a lot of time and research to get the nuts and bolts of railroading right. There is plenty to learn from this book. That he weaves this together with fascinating characters and a great train board mystery makes this book a joy to read.

The book came out in 2002 and can be bought on Amazon or E-bay for a couple of bucks. Give yourself a holiday present. Read *THE CHRISTMAS TRAIN*.

Extreme Trains Series

The History Channel opens a new whistle-blowing series called *Extreme Trains* hosted by train conductor Matt Bown on November 11 at 10pm. The series, shot in hi-def, will explore the inner workings of a different type of train and its place in history during each episode. Tiger Aspect Productions produces for History.

The first five episodes were worth the effort to catch them. Here is a rundown of the remaining episodes:

6. Overnight Traveler - 12/16/08

The Chicago to Seattle hosts the busiest passenger route in America. The route passes through America's longest tunnel and deals with 12 foot high snow drifts in the Cascade Mountains.

7. Circus Train - 12/23/08

The circus train from Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey is longest privately owned train in the world!

8. Transcontinental - 12/30/08

Union Pacific's Omaha to Sacramento route is the busiest freight line anywhere, one that crosses the world's longest rail causeway, though the world's largest rail yard and over the fearsome Donner Pass.

Shows air at 10pm. Details of the shows can be found on the History Channel web site at:

<http://www.history.com/minisites/extreme-trains>



S-Gauge Does Well on



by John Aaron

We are all aware that you can take an American Flyer item, hold it for twenty years, and sell it on e-bay for a fat profit. How about s-scale “scale items” that are not that old? I am pleased to report these items do just fine. Let’s take a look at eight items I recently sold:

The items were an American Models UP 50' box car, Rail Box 50' box car, Baldwin S-12 IC switcher, and a 72' NH passenger coach. Also, S-Helper Service SW-9 IC switcher, IC extended vision cabooses, Chessie covered hopper, and MEC bulkhead flat car.

Total cost of these items when I purchased them 4 years ago was \$525.55. After all E-Bay listing fees, commissions, Pay-Pal fees, and shipping costs, I cleared \$443.58. My “loss” on the items was only \$81.97, a little over 15%. Considering I had the eight items for four years that would amount to each item having cost me \$2.56 per year. I would call that a cheap “lease”! Prototype railroads would love to get that kind of lease percentage on their equipment.

E-Bay selling tips: these items were sold in the slower summer season. I probably would have gotten more money selling in the November and December peak train season.

I like to sell items in groups of ten. Since I only had eight I had to go with that. Why groups? Because the strong items protect the weak items. Even though they were separate listings over several months the group system still works. Let’s take a closer look: the item that lost the most value was

the New Haven passenger coach, more than 50%. If that was my only listing, I may have become discouraged and not listed the other items. The hot item was the MEC bulkhead flat car that brought in more than twice what it cost me! Had I listed this first I may have listed other items too high and discouraged some bidders. It’s best to form a group, decide on the starting bid before the first item is even listed, and stay committed to sell the whole group, because your big gainers could be the last few items sold.

How do I come up with a starting bid? I put aside any thought of E-Bay and Pay-Pal fees. I usually give free shipping, the cost of which I ignore also. I think about what will interest my buyer. Half price, of course. So I research what the item is selling for new today. If I find a new S-Helper box car goes for \$40.00 in 2008, I start the bidding at \$20.00. Then I let auction fever work its magic.

If you think about it, for me to have only lost only about 15% on the items I sold after all E-Bay cost and shipping were paid, many bidders went way over list price. Yep, they do! Why? Because, despite the economy, many buyers are not on a budget. If they want a particular car or road name they will pay up. Also in many parts of the country hobby shops are few and far between and they only see a train show every once in a blue moon. Why would they not just buy the item from S-Helper Service or American Models (assuming it was still available) rather than pay more for it on E-Bay? I don’t really understand this, but, I have two theories: 1. Everyone wants to be a winner. On e-bay you “win an item!” 2. Americans are very brand conscience. Between our S manufactures and E-Bay, the bigger brand is E-Bay.

SJSG presents Appreciation Award

By Hank Worrell



(L-R) Joe Balcer, Jim Brandenburger, Hank Worrell and Greg Berndtson.

Photo by Ken Palmer

Hank Worrell, SJSG President, presents a business card holder, (constructed by SJSG member Hal Farlow), a cabooses with battery operated light with track mounted on a wood base), to Jim Brandenburger, President, Riverton Square, LLC, as a token of appreciation for the use of one of Jim's business locations for the club to work on our new layout.



Fred's Train Parts Open House

Fred Jester will be open daily from December 15, 2008 thru February 15, 2009 from 10 am to 6 pm. All parts and train inventory will be available for your viewing and purchase.

From NJ, take Rt. 322 North, to Concord Road Exit, (just before on ramp to I-95 South), look for Yanks Farms Building on the right side just before Bethel Ave. Trailer is located at the rear of the store.

Phone # [REDACTED].

Upcoming Train Shows

by Hank Worrell

The following members signed up to help display the club layout at the up-coming show.

Please confirm your attendance ASAP so that plans can be finalized. If your name is not on one of these lists - please participate in one of the clubs most entertaining events, These are always enjoyable, and if you have trains you want to run, bring it along! Let Hank Worrell know if you plan to join.

Tuckahoe, NJ Show

Fri., Dec. 19 – Setup, 2 pm.

(7) Tom Burns, Joe Jones, Jerry Mackey, Mike Packi, Joe Rascone, Art Turner and Hank Worrell.

Sat., Dec. 20 – 7:30 am to 3 pm.

(7) Tom Burns, Hal Farlow, Mike Packi, Ken Palmer, Joe Rascone, Art Turner and Hank Worrell.

Sun., Dec. 21 – 8:30 am to 2 pm.

(7) Tom Burns, Hal Farlow, Joe Jones, Jerry Mackey, Mike Packi, Ken Palmer, and Hank Worrell.

Have you been working on the railroad?

(The new club layout that is... hey, that's a railroad!)

Every Tuesday and Wednesday evening a work party is organized to lay track, build scenery, connect electrical circuits, and well... build a railroad. If you're interested - please see Greg or Joe to get the schedule and directions... and no, coffee and donuts are not provided.

South Jersey Meeting Clinics

Previous club meeting clinics covered just about every possible topic to help maintain your engines in top condition - and even dress them up a little.



Greg Berndtson (R) talks about making your own decals to add that special touch to a custom paint job. Joe Balcer (L) looks on in awe (or is that a sugar overload from his sixth can of Coke...)



Bob Foster Sr. always has a good presentation, this time it was how to rewind your motor armatures. Bob passed on some hard-earned tips on how to make a bad engine run like new.

Strasburg Trip

A proposal to change the date of the annual New Years Eve day trip was made to set the date to Sat., Dec. 27 (but following the same itinerary). The thought is it might allow more club members to participate.

Plans are to meet 7:30 am for breakfast at the County House Restaurant in Woodbury, then carpool to the National Toy Train Museum arriving by 10 am. Then head to the Strasburg RR 12 pm lunch train at 11:00am so we're there early enough to board. After lunch we will head to the PA RR Museum at 2:30 pm and then maybe hit the hobby shops before closing time.

We need a body count no later than the Dec. meeting in order to pre-order tickets for the group to eat lunch on the Strasburg RR lunch car (lunch is extra fare, other options for lunch are available for those so choosing).



Hank Worrell adds to the list of clinic topics by presenting a how-to on repairing Flyer smoke units. He took some of the mystery out of the process - and even covered several styles of engines. His demonstration of a rebuilt engine had the first row gasping for air...



Todd Roman (L) and Hal Farlow tag team a presentation on adding LEDs to your Flyer engines. New headlights and reverse lights really dress up an engine.

A PASSENGER STATION IN A BIG CITY

submitted by John Bigley

(This is the ninth in a series of articles from "A Study of Railway Transportation" published for teachers in 1950 by the Association of American Railroads.)

Who has not experienced a thrill on entering the waiting room or the concourse of a great railway station? All day long the hustle and bustle continues—an endless ebb and flow of humanity—people coming and going, some making business trips, others on sight seeing or vacation trips, some on their way to visit friends or relatives, some returning to school or college, soldiers on their way to or from camp, sailors going home on leave, people greeting relatives and friends or bidding good-bye to those who are going away.

There are also people buying tickets, asking questions at the information desk, studying timetables and maps, watching train bulletins, attending to baggage, sending telegrams, making telephone calls, buying newspapers, magazines, and books to read on the journey and making other preparations for railway travel.

In other parts of the station, trucks loaded with mail are on their way to or from the trains. Other trucks piled high with trunks, suitcases, and packages are hurrying from the baggage room to the baggage cars. "Red caps," or porters, are hurrying up and down the platforms with passengers' luggage, or hurrying off to help travelers with their bags and packages. Conductors, engineers, trainmen, and porters are busy with last minute details necessary to get the trains away on schedule.

Somewhere in or near the station, unseen to train crews and passengers, is the train dispatcher or power-man who controls and directs the movements of trains by means of

signals. This is done by a system of electrically operated controls which set switches and signals for trains moving in and out of the station—operations which are described in the following chapters.

Train arrivals are telegraphed to all parts of the station, such as the station master's office, the information booth, and the baggage and mail rooms. "Red caps," too, must know the platform numbers of arriving trains so that they can be on hand to assist the incoming passengers with their baggage.

On the bulletin board in the station concourse or waiting room is marked the exact time of the departure of each train and track on which the train is located.

This is a picture of the waiting room in one of the largest railway passenger stations in the United

States. Nearly three hundred trains leave or enter this station daily. A few are suburban trains to and from outlying residential districts; the others are trains which run to and from distant cities.

On the right are doors leading to the concourse and train platforms, some of which are below the street level. To the left is a circular information booth where clerks answer questions about train schedules, train connections, railway fares, and other travel details. Behind the information booth are the Pullman and coach ticket windows, the entrance to the baggage room, and an exit to a taxicab loading platform.

Between the far entrance to the concourse and the ticket windows alcove are the Western Union desk, a

room with public telephones, and locker unit with individual compartments for checking baggage quickly. Similar locker units are installed elsewhere in the waiting room and also in the concourse. The desk on the right is used only at night. Sleeping car passengers leave their tickets here before boarding the trains, so that the conductor will not have to awaken them later to collect the tickets.

Each railway station is under the supervision of a station agent or a station master. He has charge of the



A Passenger Station in a Big City

ticket office, the baggage room, the parcel check room, the information booth, the rec-cap service, the announcement of trains, the handling of passengers, baggage, mail, and express through the station, and other matters pertaining to station operations.

Of course, railway stations vary in size just as cities and towns and villages vary in size. To accommodate the traveling public, big cities are provided with large railway stations; small cities with smaller railway stations, and towns and villages with still smaller stations. Likewise, the number of station employees is large or small depending upon the importance of the communities and the business done.

'Twas the night before Christmas

(slightly Revised)

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through my pike,
Not a steamer was stirring, not even a Mike.
My yard tracks invitingly empty and bare,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

The diesels were nestled all snug in their sheds,
While visions of DCC danced in their heads.
While I, in my blue-and-white engineer's cap,
Had just settled down for a long winter's nap.

When down in the train room, there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the basement I flew like an ace,
Tripped over the cat and fell flat on my face.

I stifled a curse meant for Chessie (the cat),
And I muttered to no one, "I meant to do that,"
When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But an S Gauge sleigh and eight 1/64 inch reindeer.

With an engineer driving, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than GG-1's, onward they came,
And he blew a steam whistle and called them by name:

"On Weaver! On Overland, Babbitt and Walthers!
On Kadee, All-Nation, Atlas and others!
To the top of the mountains of Hydrocal plaster,
Now dash away, dash away, dash away faster!"

As dry leaves that behind a new Genesis fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So in through the window the coursers they flew
With the sleigh full of trains, and St. Nicholas too.

And then, on my roundhouse, I saw on the roof
The prints in the dust of each S Scale hoof.
As I drew a deep breath, and was turning around,
From beneath the bench-work, St. Nick came with a
bound.

He was dressed like an engineer from head to foot,
And his clothes had that fine smell of ashes and soot;
A bundle of trains he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

His eyes-just like marker lights! Dimples, how merry!
His cheeks like a Warbonnet, nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And his beard was so white, it would please Phoebe Snow.

He puffed on a pipe as he refilled its bowl,
And the smoke, it smelled just like bituminous coal.

He had a broad face and a belly (I found)
That shook like a tank car with wheels out-of-round.

He was chubby and plump, and I wanted to shout,
"Yes! The man's got a route the UP can't buy out!"
A wink of his eye as he passed near the door
Soon gave me to know I'd have freight cars galore.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work.
He filled all my yard tracks; then turned with a jerk,
And leaving an airbrush he'd found on eBay and giving a
nod, he returned to his sleigh.

He pumped up the brakes, blew two blasts on his whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,

"HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!
KEEP 'EM ROLLING!
GOOD NIGHT!"

---Author unknown

(Shamelessly stolen from the December *Stateline 'S' Gaugers* newsletter, who borrowed it from the Badgerland 'S' Gaugers Newsletter.)



(On behalf of the SJSG Officers, I wish all members, and those they cherish, the best Christmas and the Happiest and Most Prosperous of New Years.)

