

News from Houston N'Crowd



September/October 2010

THE ORDERBOARD



We visit THE OVERLAND ROUTE

"GREEN EYE" - CLEAR BLOCK

by Ted Davis, President

Thanks go to Tom Wayburn, Marty Giesecke and Steve Lancaster for their articles included in this issue. We have also included a membership roster with the PDF sent to members (it is not included in the hard copy available to the public), a club locomotive roster and a car sales inventory.

As voted for at the August meeting we have started building the test track we will be using at the Big Texas Train Show in October. Scales included are G, Lionel, HO and N. Steve Lancaster and I cut and painted the wooden base. We have also completed installing the tracks. Next we will be looking to pass the project on to someone to install the electrical components.

We will have four tables at the train show. One will be for the test track, one for our T-Trak modules, one for club information and sales, and the last one will be a sales table for members' items. A 10 percent commission benefitting the club will be collected for all members' items sold at the club's tables. Our area at the show will also feature the club banner.

If you have something you want to try and sell, you should bring it to the club's display at the show on Saturday or Sunday. Items not sold should be picked up Sunday afternoon before the show closes at 4 p.m. (Note: You will have to pay \$8 admission both days unless you are a volunteer.)

We need volunteers to man the tables during the show - **you can get in free if you work the tables for a couple of hours!** Contact me by email at tedjr1@swbell.net if you want to volunteer.

The San Jacinto Model Railroad Club's Fall

Layout Tour schedule has been published and can be downloaded from the San Jac web site: <http://sanjac.leoslair.com/tour.htm>. The N'Crowd will participate as we did last year by being open Dec. 4 and 5.

We have cancelled our TrainCat order. TrainCat is still advertising new products and attending train shows to promote their products, so it seems that they are not out of business. In fact, they have added direct sales to their web site. However, I have also talked to one of their dealers who said that they have not received any product for quite a while.

The decal committee has met and Tom Marsh now will be working on the art work required to have our new BC&G decals produced.

In closing, we wish Marty Giesecke and Vince Walker a Happy Birthday!

Elections Ahead

At the September meeting, the "Nominating Committee Chairman" presented the proposed slate of candidates for next year's officers and the board position that is open. The candidates will be presented for election per the bylaws at the November membership meeting.

The candidates are:

President - Ted Davis, Steve Lancaster
Vice President - Charlie Aselin, Eddie Aycock
Treasurer - Tom Marsh
Secretary - Kirk Poorman, Rick Gonzalez
Board member - Robert Moore



Next N'Crowd Meeting:
7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 20

Papa Ben's Train Place, 4007-E Bellaire Blvd.
Come and check out progress on the BC&G!

**Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
August 18, 2010
Prepared by Rick Gonzalez, Secretary**

- Missing member call went to Jason Smith, along with thanks for hosting the club at his open house.

President's Report

- Do we want to be on this year's San Jacinto Model Railroad Club layout tour? It seems we do, for one weekend.
- Door prizes were handed out. Winners included Bob Folser, Steve Lancaster, Steve Redd, Terry Hooks, and Charlie Aselin.

Vice President's Report

- The used magazines in the back of the store are being given away. Come get yours!
- Steve will be making holders for our uncoupling tools that will go on the fascia. This will keep them off the layout.

Treasurer's Report

- We have \$12,976.71 in the checking account. We currently owe Papa Ben's \$102.55.

Secretary's Report

- Today we have 17 members present for the meeting.
- Rick will bring the most current version of the roster to add to the club's computer in the layout room.

Layout Master's Report

- Construction is moving along.
- There are always things to do, and volunteers are always appreciated.

New Business

- Club officers for next year: The Nominating Committee consists of Ted Davis, Steve Lancaster, and Tom Wayburn. The current nominees are as follows:

President - Ted Davis, Steve Lancaster

Vice President - Charlie Aselin

Treasurer - Tom Marsh

Secretary - Kirk Poorman

Board Members - Steve Redd, Robert Moore

- President Ted Davis, will present the slate of nominees to the Board in September. In October the slate will be published, and the election will be held in November. It's not too late to nominate someone or to throw your name into the hat!

- Richard Bartlett showed the club some innovative wiring that he bought. He also had a nice large picture that he got from Xres.com which is suitable for backdrops.
- Tom Marsh asked the members if they'd be interested in building a test track module for the Big Texas Train Show in October. We voted to build one.
- Eddie Aycock brought up a small change he wanted to make to the track on the club layout. A spirited discussion ensued, in which it was decided to investigate the matter further.
- Eddie also mentioned that Wal-Mart has a wireless printer for only \$66 which would suit the club's purposes.

Old Business

- Decals: Rail Graphics returned our check. Tom Marsh wants to know what to put on the decal sheet. More numbers and less car names was suggested, as were the two different logos. The Decal Committee will meet and present their suggestions to the club at the next meeting.
- The Districting Committee will also be meeting soon.
- Rail Ops: Eddie Aycock has entered our layout's towns into the system. Our layout covers the area from New Orleans to San Antonio, with a couple of fictitious towns thrown in, such as Bennett. We've also entered approximately 80 cars into the system.
- Ted will bring more of the club's rolling stock in to be entered.
- In a couple of months, Eddie Aycock will teach us how to use Rail Ops.
- Gordon Bliss has a video covering train operations in Europe to show after the meeting.
- Motion to adjourn was passed at 8:06.

Members in Attendance:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Richard Bartlett | 10. Terry Hooks |
| 2. Rick Gonzalez | 11. James C. Senneff Jr. |
| 3. Ted Davis | 12. Kirk Poorman |
| 4. Charlie Aselin | 13. Eddie Aycock |
| 5. Dan Gutierrez | 14. Tom Marsh |
| 6. Steve Lancaster | 15. Tom Wayburn |
| 7. Gordon Bliss | 16. Robert Moore |
| 8. Steve Redd | 17. Rick Townsend |
| 9. Bob Folser | |

**Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
September 15, 2010
Prepared by Rick Gonzalez, Secretary**

- Door Prizes - Gordon Bliss, Ray Byer, Tom Wayburn, Steve Lancaster, and Robert Moore all won door prizes.

President's Report

- The club is selling some Peco electrofrog turnouts - see Ted.
- The test track module we built for the Big Texas Train Show still needs to be wired. Any volunteers?
- A Missing Member call went out to Vince Walker. He didn't answer.
- Member surveys were handed out to those members who didn't fill one out last year.
- The truck pin chart was passed around so that members could verify their colors.
- The president is to present the slate of nominees for our club elections to the Board of Directors:
 - President - Ted Davis, Steve Lancaster
 - Vice President - Charlie Aselin, Eddie Aycock
 - Treasurer - Tom Marsh
 - Secretary - Kirk Poorman, Rick Gonzalez
 - Board member - Steve Redd, Robert Moore
- Members will vote in November.

Vice President's Report

- Steve is mass-producing several table top layouts to sell at Papa Ben's. He's volunteered to bring one to the show for our table.

Treasurer's Report

- As of August 31, we had \$11,988.73 in the checking account. We deposited \$106, and disbursed \$1,093.98.

Secretary's Report

- Tonight's turnout is a bit on the light side, with 13 members in attendance.

Layout Master's Report

- The yard tracks are currently being tested. Tom Wayburn painted the tracks.
- The station's tracks are currently being laid out.

- Eddie has input about 180 cars into RailOps, along with all the locations on the layout. We're looking at about five people for a full operating crew. An operating session will involve three passenger trains, and about eight to 10 freight trains, to be tweaked as we go along. We could use more passenger trains, if anybody wants to bring theirs.

New Business

- The next newsletter will be out within the next few days.
- Club members will get free admittance if they work our table at the Big Texas Train Show.
- We will have extra space at our table for members to sell their trains if they want to. A 10 percent fee will apply to any items sold. This will benefit your club. You will need to label and price your items and will also need to provide a written inventory of your items.
- Saturday, Sept. 25, there will be an airbrushing clinic at the Houston Railroad Museum.
- Oct. 23 will see the local NMRA group hosting a picnic. Please RSVP to Ray Byer if you're interested in attending.
- Gordon Bliss believes that the club should start voting on layout expenditures. Tom Marsh moves for an amount not to exceed \$2,000 to be authorized until the end of this year. The motion passes.
- Eddie Aycock says the club's layout could use more covered hoppers and flat cars. Color your pins and bring your rolling stock in!
- Motion to adjourn passed 8:15pm.

Members in attendance:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Rick Gonzalez | 8. Bob Folser |
| 2. Dan Gutierrez | 9. Tom Wayburn |
| 3. Gordon Bliss | 10. Vern Burnett |
| 4. Ray Byer | 11. Eddie Aycock |
| 5. Ted Davis | 12. Charlie Aselin |
| 6. Steve Lancaster | 13. Robert Moore |
| 7. Tom Marsh | |

We visit THE OVERLAND ROUTE

by Tom Wayburn, with photos by Amy Wayburn

Inasmuch as Jason Smith's fine Union Pacific Overland Route N scale layout has been photographed extensively lately, Ted Davis suggested that Amy and I concentrate on the Houston N'Crowd aspect of our trip.

Most readers of *The Orderboard* will know that Jason's layout was the cover story for the March-April issue of *N Scale Railroading* magazine with professional-quality photographs by N'Crowd member Gordon Bliss. Gordon used Photoshop to replace Jason's painted clouds with photographs and to blend smoothly any two sides of the background that intersected in an edge.

An extensive collection of photos of the Overland Route can be found at the website for Larry's Hobbies at <http://web.mac.com/jfbrandtrn/iWeb/Site/UPOR.html> and <http://web.mac.com/jfbrandtrn/iWeb/Site/UPOR%20update.html>.

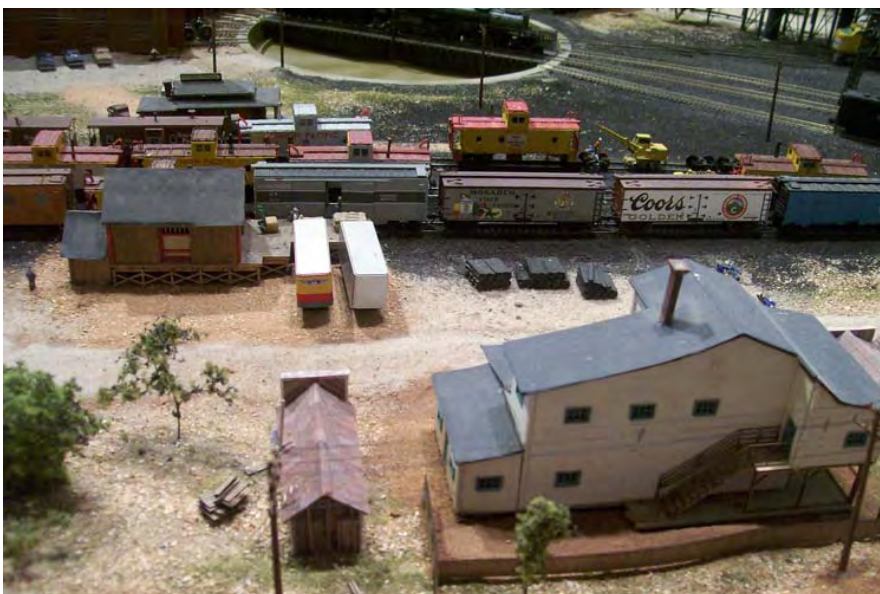
Most of the N'Crowd contingent elected to car pool. The first car left Papa Ben's Saturday morning, Aug. 7, at 8:00 a.m. with Richard Bartlett driving and Ted Davis, Charlie Aselin and LeChande Chandler as passengers. Amy and I followed in the second car, Rick Townsend made the trip alone somewhat later, and Hugh Boyd nearly succeeded in negotiating the treach-

erous Texas highways alone and without a map, but to no avail. The first N'Crowd contingent arrived promptly at 9:00 a.m. after an interesting non-MapQuest trip through industrial and railroad scenery courtesy of Richard Bartlett.

Everyone is initially impressed by the vast scope of the layout and large roster of steam locomotives, but after that, one of my first impressions of Jason's layout was the exceptionally fine track work, which turned out to be Atlas Code 55 ready-made track. I asked Jason about the necessity for low-profile wheels. He said that, as far as he could tell, most scale model steam engines came with low-profile wheels standard and required no special adaptation to Code 55. I believe the rolling stock must be customized with low-profile wheels, which can be done cheaply and swiftly. I do not remember seeing any operating problems while I was in the layout room.

That said, perhaps Jason is putting a new train on the tracks in the top photo at left.

In the *N Scale Railroading* article, one can't help but notice the



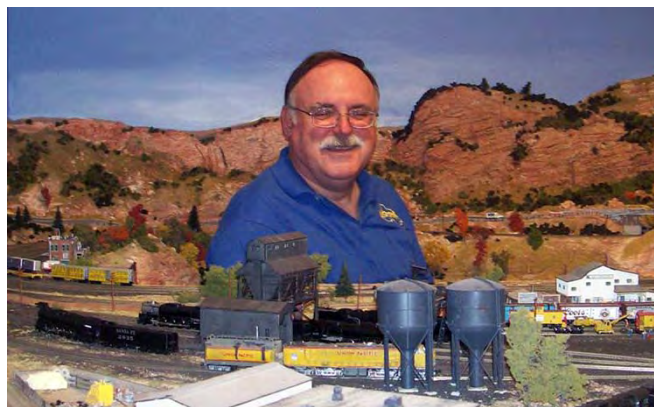
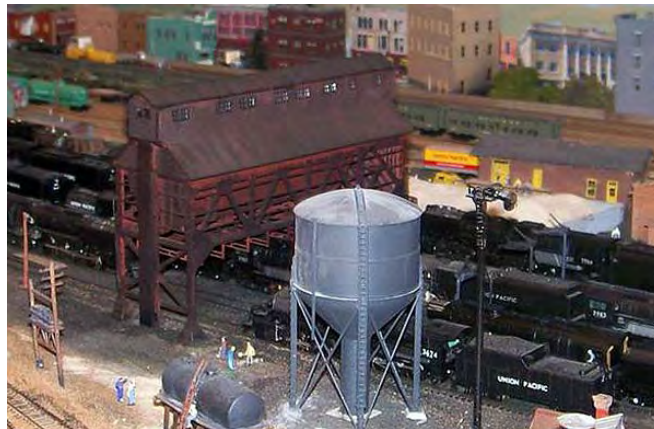
neatly strung telephone wires. Early on in the visit, I asked Jason how he did it. He said the secret lay in EZline made by Berkshire Junction Model Railroad Supplies, whose website I found at <http://www.berkshirejunction.com/>. He uses super glue and accelerator to secure the EZline. The telephone lines can be seen in the foreground of the bottom picture on the preceding page, which shows the nice detail near the Ogden train yards.

At top right is a picture of the border region between Wyoming and Utah, where at these elevations one often finds snow. This accounts for the snow fences in other places on the main line where it is currently not snowing. Jason's layout is the first I've visited that had a snow scene.

The second photo shows the coal loader at Cheyenne. I intended to show the coal loader at Ogden that has been repainted a similar dark color after it was photographed for the *N Scale Railroading* article. However, it now looks almost the same as the coal loader in this photo.

In the third photo from the top, our president Ted Davis beams behind the aforementioned coal loader and other fine models at Ogden on Jason's layout. The gas turbine engine that pulled a large number of cars at a train show is in the middle distance. Could it have been 100 cars? More?

Finally, in the bottom photo our layout master Charlie Aselin seems to be admiring the nice Code 55 track work that looks so much like the prototype.



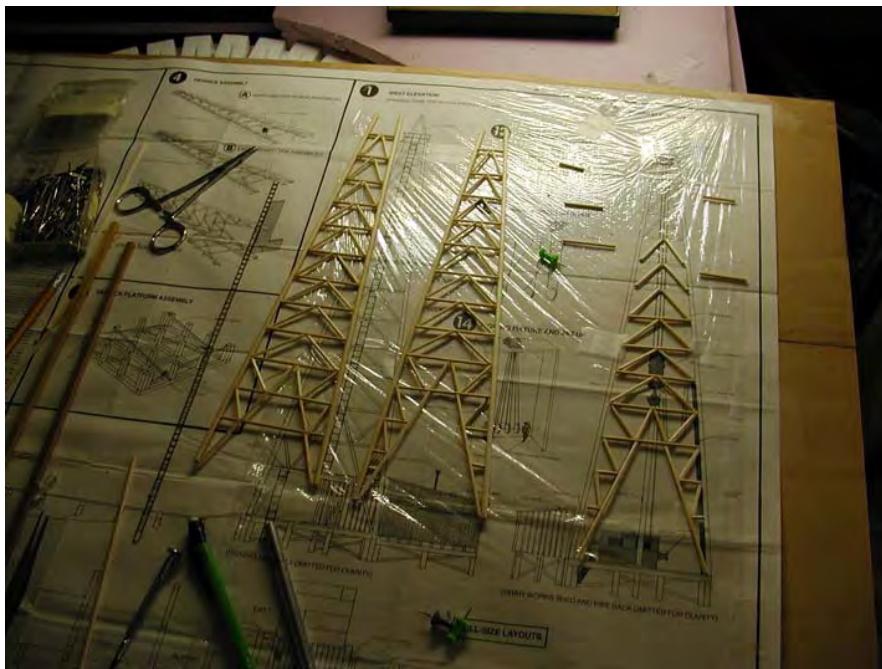
All of the photographs in this article were taken by Amy Wayburn, except the cover shot of Amy hiding behind the Sperry Flour factory at Ogden. Amy's photos for The Orderboard were taken with the Kodak Easy Share camera, the digital equivalent of the old Kodak Brownie.

Another Horribly Oversized *project*

by Steve Lancaster

A couple of months ago a young man came into Papa Ben's asking if anyone could build a craftsman kit of an oil derrick for him. It seems he was getting married soon and wanted the derrick to sit atop his groom's cake, and he would later give the model to his new father in law, whom I presume works in the oil business, or just really likes oil derricks for some reason.

So, being the guy around the shop that usually agrees to such requests, I quickly donned the tights and cape and leapt from the phone booth, beginning yet another foray into Horribly Oversized (HO) scale.



This young man had bitten off more than he could chew by picking out a kit that taxed even my amazing abilities. It was an Alexander Scale Models kit, no doubt designed by a sadist with no sympathy for incompetence. The label on the box clearly stated that this was a laser cut kit, and I suppose a few of the pieces were cut to size ahead of time, but roughly three hundred of the four hundred or so pieces in this monster had to be cut to fit according to the drawing.

Each of the derrick's four sides took a day to build. Two of them were delicate lattices of triangular bracing without the rigid corner pieces to hold it together. Assembling these sub-assemblies without the whole thing crumbling was nerve racking. The deck and its supporting structure also had to be cut piece by piece, but at least the pieces were square, and therefore easier to cut to fit. The shed and tool house were the actual laser cut part of the kit, and went together quite smoothly.

Certain that the hardest part was behind me, I assembled all of the major parts into something that closely resembled a complete oil derrick and

eagerly moved on to installing the cast metal details. There I discovered the most difficult part of all. In order to assemble the hoist, block and rigging, one was required to build a tall free standing jig that would hold the hoist and block pulleys in place while the cables (black thread) were threaded between the two about six times. Only with the cables delicately secured in place could the two halves of the block be closed.

Once the structure was complete I applied a few coats of Minwax pecan stain to the wood. This made the model a bit too shiny for the grimy realism of a

model railroad, but as a display piece it looks just fine. I still have the drawings, and since it was mostly scratchbuilt from the stock they provided, I might actually try another one some day to sell.



They make this kit in N scale, and if anyone wants one, I'd be happy to build it for them, for the paltry sum of \$1 billion.





A visit to the Emerald Isle

by Marty Giesecke

Here are a few images related to the trains we rode on our vacation in Ireland in August.

Below is the train departure board in Dublin's Heuston (pronounced Houston) station. Heuston is the main station for trains going west and south out of Dublin.



The photo at top right is the actual train, a seven-car, diesel powered trainset, that took us from Dublin to Galway. A similar train took us back from Galway to Dublin.

Later in the trip, we rode a DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) commuter train from Dublin to Malahide, a village north of Dublin. We caught our train north at Pearse Station, seen in the second photo at right. Apparently, the very first ever steam locomotive in Ireland departed south from Pearse Station in 1834. The next photo shows the train we took from Pearse Station after its arrival at Malahide, where it terminated.

On the grounds of Malahide Castle is the Fry Model Railway Museum. That's me outside the exhibit in the photo below.

The Fry Model Railway Museum does not allow photography, so I don't have any shots of the display. They have various models of Irish trains behind glass in the display room. The layout room is done like a theatrical stage, dark except for the light shining on that portion of the layout being discussed in narration heard over speakers in the room. The N'Crowd's layout is more appealing!

Returning from Malahide, we boarded an Irish Rail commuter train, seen in the shot below at right.



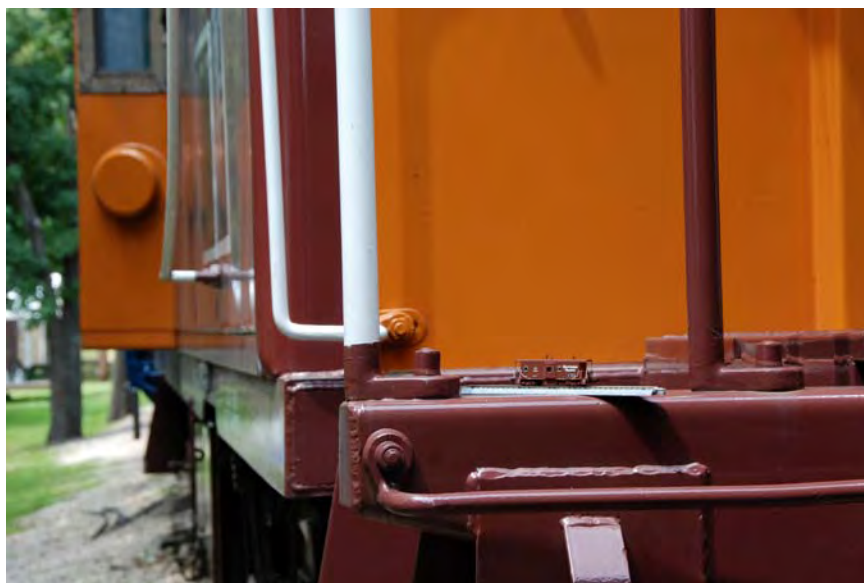
BAYOU CITY & GULF LOCOMOTIVE ROSTER - SEPTEMBER 2010

ROAD NO.	RR	DCC/DC	MODEL	PAINT COLOR	STATUS	OWNERSHIP
1471	BC&G	DCC	SD-9	BLUE	RTR	OWNED
4002	BC&G	DCC	B-23	BLACK	RTR	OWNED
4016	BC&G	DCC	B-23	BLACK	RTR	OWNED
4025	BC&G	DCC	B-23	BLACK	RTR	OWNED
4130	BC&G	DC	U-30C	BLUE	RTR	OWNED
5453	BC&G	DCC	SD-40	BLUE	RTR	OWNED
5464	BC&G	UNK	SD-40	BLUE	RTR	OWNED
N/A	N/A	UNK	U-25-B	BLUE	BAD ORDER	OWNED
N/A	N/A	DC	PA-1	UNDEC	RTR	OWNED
N/A	N/A	DC	PB-1	UNDEC	RTR	OWNED
N/A	N/A	DCC	SD-40	N/A	BAD ORDER/NO SHELL	OWNED
34	AMTRAK	DCC	P-42	SILVER	RTR	LEASED
539	BNSF	DCC	B40-8W	WARBONNET	RTR	LEASED
717	AMTRAK	DCC	MP-15	SILVER	RTR	LEASED
747	AMTRAK	DCC	MP-15	SILVER	RTR	LEASED
1288	UP	DCC	RSC-2	YELLOW	BAD ORDER	LEASED
1293	UP	DCC	RSC-2	YELLOW	RTR	LEASED
1928	CONRAIL	DC	B-23-7	BLUE	REQ PAINT/DECODER	LEASED
2380	UP	DDC	SD-60M	YELLOW	RTR	LEASED
6053	SP	DCC	E9-A	DAYLIGHT	RTR	LEASED
8034	CNW	DC	SD-60	YEL/GRN	PARTS UNIT	LEASED

ALL DCC UNITS PROGRAMMED TO THEIR FOUR DIGIT ROAD NUMBER

HOUSTON N'CROWD COMPANY STORE REPORT

<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>QTY IN STOCK</i>
COMANCHE & INDIAN GAP REEFER	7
SAN ANTONIO & ARANSAS PASS (2-PACK) WOOD SIDE BOXCAR	9
2003 CONVENTION REGISTRATION CAR	15
LONE STAR REGION-NMRA "WACO, AUSTIN & BRYAN" BOXCAR	84
LONE STAR REGION-NMRA "IRONHEAD TIMBER COMPANY" REEFER	16 SETS
2003 CONVENTION CAR (2-PACK) MOON BOXCAR & NASA TANK CAR	SOLD OUT
2003 CONVENTION CAR MOON BOXCAR	SOLD OUT
SAN ANTONIO & ARANSAS PASS (2-PACK) LOOSE PAIRS WOOD SIDE BOXCAR	SOLD OUT
SAN ANTONIO & ARANSAS PASS (SINGLE) WOOD SIDE BOXCAR GREEN	SOLD OUT
IGN (2-PACK) LOOSE PAIRS WOOD SIDE BOXCAR	SOLD OUT
KATO PRECISION RAILROAD MODELS BUSINESS CAR	SOLD OUT
"N TO THE FUTURE" PIN	17
CAP WITHOUT PATCH	31
HOUSTON N'CROWD "BAYOU CITY & GULF" PATCH	32
N TO THE FUTURE PATCH	166
"N TO THE FUTURE" ETCHED GLASS MUG	SOLD OUT



This stuff really is small!

by Tom Marsh

Your editor was pleasantly surprised to find that Athearn had released its fine model of an SP bay window caboose with the same road number as the caboose at the Houston Railroad Museum. It seemed like a good idea to take the model to the museum to photograph it with the real thing.

The only problem is that the model is really small compared to the real thing! I could not figure out how to capture both in one shot, but the best of the lot appears above.

SP No. 4696 was built in April 1979 by International Car Co. of Kenton, Ohio. Acquired by the museum in 1994 through a purchase funded by member donations, this is the newest car in the Houston museum's collection. The car is somewhat unusual in being equipped with a large number of seats. The car was so equipped to accommodate railroad security personnel accompanying certain trains.

In late 2007, with funding from a grant by Houston Endowment, No. 4696 and sister museum caboose MKT No. 6 were shipped to Arkansas for cosmetic restoration by Cherokee Mobile Services. According to various sources, the orange paint used on SP cabooses is the famous "Daylight Orange."



TIME TABLE

October 16-17

Big Texas Train Show, George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston
www.bigtexastrainshow.com

October 20

N'Crowd Membership Meeting
 Papa Ben's Train Place

October 23

Annual Business Meeting of the Texas Gulf Division of the Lone Star Region of the National Model Railroad Association, Inc., 11 a.m., Hosted by Houston Area Live Steamers at Zube Park, 17802 Roberts Rd., Hockley. **You do not have to be an NMRA member to attend and enjoy food and train rides!** RSVP to Ray Byer at raybyer@yahoo.com

November 17

N'Crowd Membership Meeting
 Papa Ben's Train Place

December TBA

N'Crowd Holiday Party and
 Combat Gift Exchange

December 15

N'Crowd Membership Meeting
 Papa Ben's Train Place

THE ORDERBOARD *from Houston N'Crowd*

Published as close to monthly (but no promises!) as possible for members and friends of N'Crowd Model Railroad Society, Inc., Houston, Texas.

Tom Marsh, Editor

Send newsletter contributions to: tom@houstonNcrowd.org. We reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity and length.

Visit our Web site:

www.houstonNcrowd.org

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