

# THE ORDERBOARD

News from Houston N'Crowd



July/August 2012

## Better boxcars headed your way *by Tom Marsh*

If you like boxcars (and who doesn't?), you are going to be very happy with new models from Atlas, Wheels of Time and ExactRail.

### Atlas Pullman Standard PS-1 40-ft boxcars

George Hollwedel of Prototype N Scale Models had a pre-production sample of the new Atlas N-scale Pullman PS-1 40-ft. boxcar on display at July's San Antonio Model Railroad Association Summer Train Show. George is

producing a special run of the cars in Western Pacific's silver and orange "Rides Like a Feather" paint scheme, and Atlas had recently forwarded the sample to him.

This is without a doubt the best model of a PS-1 boxcar ever released in N scale, and certainly the best boxcar model ever produced by Atlas. The molds have been produced to the highest modern standards, and being modular, will allow Atlas to

*Below, a pre-production sample of the new Atlas PS-1 boxcar, in a limited-run WP paint scheme to be offered exclusively by Prototype N Scale Models. The completely new model of this iconic car is expected to be available by the end of September. Compare the new model, with its etched metal roof walk and separate ladders, to the old Atlas 40-ft. PS-1 model at right, which has essentially remained unchanged for decades.*



# "GREEN EYE" - CLEAR BLOCK

*by Ted Davis, President*

## Anniversaries and other things

What is an anniversary? My friend Webster informs me it is an annual recurrence of a date marking a notable event. As such, we observe the following in mid-2012.

One year ago, we held our first operating session on the BC&G layout at Papa Ben's. It went pretty well considering it was the very first one and quite the learning experience for many of us.

One year ago, Vince Walker delivered the four repainted BC&G freight locos. This was a big boost to the BC&G power roster. Eddie Aycock is now compiling a roster for "tracking" purposes, so if you have been "contracted" to repair, paint or otherwise work on any of the club's locos, please let Eddie know that you have them, and give an estimate of when the work will be completed.

One year ago, we celebrated the driving of the BC&G golden spike. It was an event with a great deal of fanfare, as the celebration had been delayed a couple of times.

One year ago, we lost two of our members, Vern Burnett and Sven Engdorf. On a personal note, my father-in-law passed away. For all those who have gone to the big railroad where there are no derails, hotboxes or bad orders, we know they are experiencing only "Green Eyes."

Looking ahead, we will be reconstituting the layout committee for the purpose of judging the merits and feasibility of proposed changes to certain aspects of the layout, most affecting the track plan. While several members have made suggestions, we have requested that Al Hague formalize them prior to their being presented to the Layout Committee. Please note: Anyone may suggest a revision, however, it needs to be in writing and should be accompanied by drawings and/or photos to best convey the benefits of the change to the railroad.

One operational note: If you run your own rolling stock or locos on the layout they should be marked with your truck pin color, particularly if you leave them in the layout room. Remember, many items will be cleared from the railroad during the setup for operating sessions; we cannot be responsible for personal items left on the layout.

The display or disposition of the club's museum cars is pending a display design presentation by Al, which will include a written description and sketches.

Al and I have inventoried the five car storage cases. In addition, he reorganized the contents so similar items are grouped together. The club will need to review whether all of the items are actually museum pieces or noteworthy models of some kind.

Finally, we have a wanted notice. If you took pictures of the Great Bam Bam Flood of 2012, please send them to me so we can document the watery event. We are pleased to report that the Bayou City & Gulf Railroad came through the flood with only a minor disruption to service!

---

### Houston N'Crowd 2012 Officers and Volunteers

President .....	Ted Davis
Vice President .....	Steve Lancaster
Secretary .....	Richard Bartlett
Treasurer .....	Eddie Aycock
Editor & Webmaster .....	Tom Marsh
Board Member (2012) .....	Steve Redd
Board Member (2013) .....	Robert "Doc" Moore
Board Member (2014) .....	Joe Kingsberry



**N'Crowd Wednesday Membership Meetings:**  
August 15 / September 19 / October 17

**BC&G Operating Sessions:**  
TBA

Meetings start at 7 p.m. at Papa Ben's Train Place, 4007-E Bellaire Blvd. Come and check out progress on the BC&G!

**Houston N'Crowd  
Membership Meeting Report  
June 20, 2012**

**Prepared by Richard Bartlett, Secretary**

President Ted Davis called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**President's Report:** Ted announced the Bam Bam flood, which was June 2, 2012. This caused the rainout of the planned operating session. Joe made malts for various members present on Saturday, June 6 (lip-smacking good!). Harvey Stalarow and Ted did an inventory June 13 of the finished and unfinished club cars pending their disposition. Gordon Bliss will not be in town for the next two weeks while he attends two N scale conventions. For the door prize drawing, Lindsey Bodak handed members individual tickets. The first prize was a Red Caboose reefer won by Al Hague, and the second was a Northern Pacific book and other things, which were won by Lindsey. The membership howled that the fix was in!

**Vice President's Report:** VP Steve Lancaster gave us a show and tell of the nice O scale engine house he had produced for a guy he knows. To us N scalers it was BIG! Steve said he had hand-scribed the windowpanes.

**Secretary's Report:** Seventeen members present including Richard Bartlett, Al Hague, Harvey Stalarow, Dan Gutierrez, Joe Kingsberry, Tom and Amy Wayburn, Justin Coder, Eddie Aycock, Ted Davis, Mike, Lindsey and Leslie Bodak, Ray Byer, Tom Marsh and Charlie Aselin, who had returned from the missing! The secretary gave a quick show and tell of the video camera board he and his son have produced to install in N- and HO-scale engines. These engines will be used to record Jim Lemmond and Peter Bryan's HO layouts and Gordon Bliss's N scale layout for Richard's clinic, which will be given at the National NMRA convention in Grand Rapids, Mich., on Aug. 2 and 4.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Eddie Aycock reported that the Club has \$11,933.32 in cash and \$4,804.08 in the CD.

**Layout Master's Report:** Layout Master Charlie Aselin deferred to others. Richard reported the successful testing and now continuous use of the Austin siding; he has added scenic elements, including a cut stone wall hand-laid from individual granite pieces. Richard acquired a station model very much in the same style as the existing Austin station, and requested that the club reimburse him for this after he has completed the model. Al proposed the motion, seconded by Joe Kingsberry, and carried unanimously. Richard also offered to use existing materials he has left over from the engine house to add platforms on either side of the station.

**Quartermaster's Report:** Ted has a listing of the cars he said would be available to members with an interest in the listing. Perhaps at a future meeting he may ask members if they have an interest in purchasing any of these cars.

**Old Business:** Tom Marsh announced that the BC&G clock kits were here. Members may pick them up after the meeting. BC&G decals are still in his mind.

**Operating Session Report:** Eddie discussed problems with engine decoders and told how he was able to program three club engines with a password lock on the decoder. After the meeting, Eddie picked up several more of the club engines to do the same. Ted and Eddie went back and forth about buildings that were removed from the layout because they were sitting on tracks before the OP session.

Discussion moved to adding a "show loop" using the Union Station area. Specifically, Al Hague brought up the possibility of some minor modifications in the area of Danville to provide the loop for running trains all the way around the layout. The discussion on this was deferred until next meeting, and it was suggested that Al would present something at the next meeting for the membership to review.

**New/Old Business:** Ray Byer began a discussion regarding happenings at the recent LSR convention held in Houston. Ray announced Leslie Bodak as new District 8 Board member and announced Lindsey Bodak as a first-time winner in the Diesel Model category. Lindsey also won the Linda Little award for best woman modeler as well. Eighty-seven models were entered and all but five merited. Richard Bartlett entered an engine house, but his model didn't merit. Ray made helpful suggestions about improving it before the meeting. Ray described Will Bartlett's entry, a Giant Sequoia tree in N scale, and stated that it was remarkable. He said that several judges actually were amazed at the size when measured with an N scale ruler, but since there was no category for trees, the decision for the Tree Award fell to Duane Richardson's discretion, "After all, it was Loren" (Loren Neufeld of N'Crowd Union Station fame).

Richard asked Leslie to propose defining a tree category for the next year's LSR contest as the entry form listed trees as a category, but entries were not treated as a separate category. Leslie indicated that she had several things to propose, but did not specifically respond to the request.

Al indicated that he had discussions with the LSR President as to why the attendance had dropped so much. The President indicated that economic times and the aging membership with little infusion of new blood were the cause. The latter does not bode well for the future of the hobby.

Tom Marsh stated that next year the LSR is at the DFW Sheraton.

As authorized, Justin Coder purchased a 10-place 9V battery charger with requisite batteries. Justin stated that they performed well at Gordon Bliss's LSR operating sessions.

Mike Bodak then proposed adjournment at 7:55 and it was passed unanimously.



After the meeting, several members (Eddie Aycock, Tom Marsh, Ray Byer, Al Hague, Ted Davis, Justin Coder, Richard Bartlett and Harvey Stalarow) retired to the layout to discuss with Al potential changes to the layout to add additional interest to the existing show loop or provide an additional one. Al will present these several proposals at the next meeting.

**Houston N'Crowd  
Membership Meeting Report  
July 18, 2012**

**Prepared by Richard Bartlett, Secretary**

President Ted Davis called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**President's Report:** Hugh Boyd has decided to move into an assisted living facility, and as such has downsized his N-scale layout drastically. Door prize drawings produced a 40-ft. boxcar for Joe Kingsberry and some directional arrow LEDs for Al Hague.

**Vice President's Report:** On Friday, Steve Lancaster will be breaking ground for the Lancaster Layout Factory, a 12-ft. by 18-ft. structure. Steve's planning to use solar panels to produce power (a green structure!). Let's see just how many panels he'll need to run a soldering iron!

**Treasurer's Report:** As of July 18, 2012, we had \$11,914.60 in our account, a CD still at \$4,804.08, gift certificates amounting to \$99.72 and a \$20.00 donation from a group of visitors to the layout.

**Secretary's Report:** Members present totaled 16 and included Ted Davis, Steve Lancaster, Eddie Aycock, Richard Bartlett, Robert "Doc" Moore, Harvey Stalarow, Gordon Bliss, Dan Gutierrez, Joe Kingsberry, Ray Byer, Tom Marsh, Leslie Bodak, James Senneff, Al Hague and the phantom Valdez brothers, Jason and Dominic.

**Layout Master's Report:** Some work has been done since the last meeting. Richard indicated that once he gets back from the Grand Rails convention, he will finish the engine house and the Austin station. Gordon has volunteered to help Richard insure that the turntable is wired correctly and also the rest of the trackage leading to the engine house. Dan has done a little more in Danville and Charlie has painted some streets in Bayou City.

**Operating Session Report:** This is the first anniversary of the OP sessions. Eddie is going to send an email call out for members to participate in an OP session on Aug. 4 at 5 p.m. If there isn't a response of six minimum, then we will postpone until September. Ted asked if it would be possible to combine Ted's and Eddie's spreadsheet to keep track of car and loco inventory and post it in the layout room. They agreed to work something out.

**New Business:** Al Hague brought up that he has 21 coal hoppers and a caboose decorated in BC&G colors by Loren Neufeld. He offered these to the club for \$100. A motion was offered by Tom Marsh, and seconded by Gordon Bliss. The decision was passed unanimously. Second suggestion was adding a second loop at the far end of the layout by a diagonal hole in the second wall next to a spur. The loop would be created by using flex track to lead from a right hand turnout from the spur in Allyn across the chasm next to the engine house and joining the loop next to the outer loop going next to the back track using a left-hand curved switch just past the existing curved right-hand switch. By using a tunnel approach replacing part of the chasm, no trestle will need to be built. Discussion ebbed and flowed about different suggestions regarding this, and the consensus was that existing problems needed to be fixed on the various parts of the layout that are already in place. Tom pointed out that until Charlie finishes with the trackage in Bayou City, no loop would be functional anyway. So, Gordon requested we re-establish the Layout Committee. Volunteering and volunteered were: Dejan, Harvey, Gordon, Tom Marsh, Charlie, Ted, Terry, Al Hague and Richard.

As a social activity, Ted wanted to see if anyone wanted to attend the Astros game the last Saturday of the month. Comments such as Lastros, and NO WAY followed.

Joe Kingsberry has in his possession three CNW engines that Trent Iocca donated to the club. He wants some numbers for the engines. Dominic (The Phantom) became all excited when the CNW engines were mentioned. He had recently seen one of these engines in its original, non-Union Pacific livery.

Ray looked at our MKT loco 351 and found lint and ground foam in the trucks and recommends we do NOT put locomotives on the scenery! Ray asked for the loco to be unlocked so he could change the CVs for the forward direction to give the little guy some gumption.

Tom said a newsletter will be forthcoming. NMRA members will be pleased to know that the Division and LSR will get over \$3,000 each from the LSR regional convention held in Houston in June. Several upcoming train shows were noted: Galveston Train Show is in October, then Beaumont Hooters is in November, and SAMRA - San Antonio July 28-29; details are available at Papa Ben's for many of these. Richard asked Tom Marsh how the Houston Railroad Museum move was progressing. Tom reported that a site for temporary storage has been arranged for the rolling stock, and that a master plan is under development. He hinted that perhaps the Museum may have a new location pinned down within the next month.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

# Excuses, excuses

by Steve Lancaster

Hello fellow modelers! I feel I should apologize, or at least offer some lengthy explanation as to why I've been unable to contribute much in the way of articles or club participation lately. To put it simply, I'm very busy. So busy in fact that, once again, I don't have time to produce a proper article. Here's why...

Every Thursday and Friday for the last few months I've been working at a residence in West University, building an 8-ft. by 8-ft. HO layout. The table rests on legs, but has steel cables attached at the corners that are capable of lifting the layout up to the ceiling. This feature was built into the house specifically for that purpose. The layout itself includes, or soon will, a harbor with a two-track car float, a small town, a mountain with four tunnels, an upper level with coal mine and logging scenes, and three scratch-built bridges. Several of the structures are kit or scratch built as well.

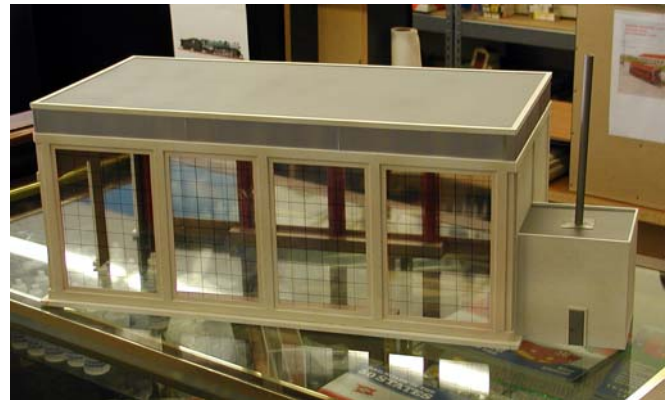
I also have several structure projects consuming my time. I recently completed the O scale engine house that I showed at the June meeting. This building filled my evenings for the better part of two weeks.

I already had an arrangement with Gary Simon to build the JV Models logging camp kit for his On30 layout. This is a craftsman kit that consists of seven similar wood structures. Those of you who are familiar with craftsman kits know that they are basically a pile of sticks, a few crude drawings and, if you're lucky, a photo on the box. The drawings and the photos rarely match.

Next on the agenda will be a project for Tom Cobb. He needed a long narrow warehouse for a siding on his layout, and found one in the pages of Lance Mindheim's book, *How to Build a Switching Layout*. Lance combined two Pikestuff warehouse kits and added a half inch foundation. A simple and effective kitbash, since Pikestuff kits are made to be built in a variety of configurations.

Well, there you have it. This is why I've been so neglectful of my duties. By the way, in case you haven't recognized my biting sarcasm, let me assure you I would never apologize for playing choo-choo too much, especially when I'm getting paid for it. Despite my hectic schedule, I can only pity someone who doesn't suffer from my problems. Perhaps next issue I'll have time to write a real article for *The Orderboard*!

Below, views of the "flying" layout built by Steve.





**Better boxcars** *from page 1*

configurations of door number, types and sizes, roof styles and other railroad-specific details.

Over 100,000 PS-1 40-ft. boxcars were built between 1947 and 1963, and they were a common sight on some railroads into the 1980s. The Atlas models have an MSRP of \$26.95 for decorated cars; the Prototype N Scale Models WP cars may actually cost a little less, even though they are a limited run.

The new PS-1 will ride on Barber S-2A 50-ton trucks with metal wheels, and will feature body-mounted couplers, separately-applied ladders and other details, a nicely done etched metal roof walk, 10- or 12-stiffener roof, various door styles and one of three different brake wheel styles (Ajax, Equipco or Miner), depending on the prototype. The first run will feature one of several planned single door styles. Future runs will include different door widths and/or double doors, along with other prototype features.

First road names from Atlas will include B&M, Buffalo Creek, Cotton Belt, Lehigh Valley, Maine Central, Milwaukee Road, Rutland, Western Pacific brown and yellow and undecorated. The silver and orange WP feather scheme will only be available from Prototype N Scale Models.

More information about Prototype N Scale Models can be had by sending an email to George at [proto.nscale@yahoo.com](mailto:proto.nscale@yahoo.com). He generally attends most of the train shows in the region with all of his currently available special run models on view. More information about the new Atlas PS-1 is at [www.atlasrr.com/NFreight/n40ps1boxcar.htm](http://www.atlasrr.com/NFreight/n40ps1boxcar.htm).

**Wheels of Time PC&F 50-ft. insulated boxcars**

Wheels of Time will produce an all-new N-scale model of the Pacific Car & Foundry 50-ft. insulated loader-equipped boxcar. These cars were

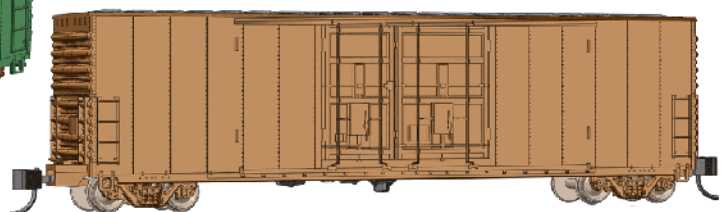
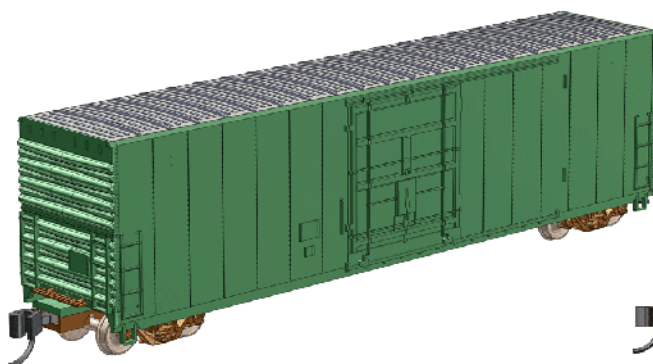
designed to transport food or other goods that required constant temperatures and a cushioned ride. The first of the cars entered service in the mid-1960s and variations were built for a number of years. PC&F, which became known as PACCAR in 1972, exited the railcar construction business in the mid-1980s. However, many of the PC&F insulated 50-ft. boxcars remain in service today.

According to Wheels of Time, the all-new model will incorporate railroad-specific options such as single or double Youngstown plug doors and Hydra-Cushion or Keystone cushioned underframe details. The cars will have body-mounted couplers, correct ride height, metal wheelsets, and a high level of detail. Initial roadnames have not been announced; more information and photos will be available soon at [www.wheelsoftime.com](http://www.wheelsoftime.com).

**ExactRail PS 50-ft. “waffle” boxcars**

As you may know, earlier this year ExactRail announced it would discontinue its dealer network and sell direct to customers only. The availability of the new ExactRail Pullman Standard waffle side boxcar in N-scale was the push I needed to place an order. The online process at [www.exactrail.com](http://www.exactrail.com) proved straightforward, and delivery was quick. However, the online price with shipping was probably higher than I would have paid at Papa Ben’s.

The model itself is nicely done, and comes equipped with ExactRail Barger 70-ton S-2 trucks with Micro-Trains #1015 couplers and machined metal 33-in. wheels. The new model is based on cars delivered to Southern Railway beginning in 1974; eventually over 5,000 were delivered to the railroad and they can still be seen today in both their original Southern paint and refurbished in NS colors. Similar



*Engineering drawings of the new Wheels of Time PC&F 50-ft. box cars. The cars will be available in single and double door variants. Images courtesy Wheels of Time.*

cars were delivered to CSX. ExactRail offers the waffle boxcars in three Southern variations totaling

15 different road numbers, and in multiple road numbers for NS, CSX and DME.



Above, two of the three variations of Southern Railway PS 50-ft. "waffle" boxcars now available from ExactRail; note the yellow door opener on the variant at left. The car at right is "as delivered" to Southern by Pullman Standard.

## Racing the great flood

by Gordon Bliss

On June 2, the Bayou City & Gulf paint shop released the newly refurbished train set for the *Dome Express*. The six heavyweight cars in the set are named *Gulf King*, *Gulf Sand*, *Gulf Sun*, *Bayou Queen*, *Bayou Belle*. The open-platform observation car is named *Bayou City*.

Before the company photographer could take any photos, the Great Bam Bam Flood of 2012 hit Bayou City, and both the *Dome Express* and the BC&G streamliner *Bluebonnet* were sent

to Allyntown to avoid any damage. These photos were snapped at the Allyntown depot.





# Observations on BC&G operations

Editorial by Tom Marsh

I have a few observations to make about use of the club layout.

## A little courtesy, please!

Some people may not want to participate in the formal operating sessions, but prefer to just come and run some trains around the layout, either their own or the club's equipment. If you do this, or you do other work on the layout, please exercise a little courtesy:

1. If you work on the layout, do not leave stuff blocking the mainline, yards or other operational trackage when you leave.
2. If you bring your cars and/or locomotives to the layout, take them away when you are through. Don't clog up the mainline or yard with your equipment so that no one else can work the yard or run a train. I for one will move your stuff out of my way if you don't, and remember the club is not responsible for your equipment; if it is broken or disappears, that is your problem.
3. If you leave a train on the layout, put it in a siding or one of the staging yards so that other trains can move around it. Be sure to mark your cars and locomotives with your truck pin/underframe colors (see "not responsible" above).
4. Remember, when the layout is being set up for an operating session, some equipment that is not needed will be removed. We do not have good storage options for your equipment, so if you don't want it floating loose in a big box or drawer, take it home with you.

This is all common sense, and common courtesy. The BC&G is a club layout, so please consider others when you are using it.

## Operating sessions

This note arrived recently from Eddie Aycock, who along with Gordon Bliss has been coordinating the BC&G operating sessions:

*"We did not get six confirmed attendees for the session this Saturday so we are going to cancel the session and try again in September... It takes a lot of time to set up a session and do the paperwork and then to not have enough people show up to run trains for the session is a bad deal. If we are not able to get enough people in September, we need to cancel operating sessions altogether."*

It would be unfortunate if Eddie and Gordon decided not to coordinate the sessions, as they have the most experience with operations. That said, the club owns the software and presumably someone else could step up and try to keep this aspect of our club going.

However, it seems to me that the cart may be before the horse here. Why can't the operating session be set up for the number of confirmed operators rather than prescribing what appears to be an arbitrary minimum? It seems to me that if four people are confirmed by a certain date, then the session could be set up with an appropriate number of trains and jobs. We should be able to develop scenarios for varying numbers of operators, unless we bought the wrong software.

Responses to any of these comments will be published in *The Orderboard*.



# TIME TABLE

2012

## August 4

BC&G operating session cancelled

## August 15

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at  
Papa Ben's Train Place

## September TBA

BC&G operating session

## September 15-16

30th Annual CentraMOD Model  
Train Show, Frank Mayborn  
Convention Center, Temple

## September 19

N'Crowd Membership Meeting at  
Papa Ben's Train Place, 7 p.m.

## October TBA

BC&G operating session

## October 6-7

Galveston Railroad Museum Model  
Train Show

AMRE 24th Annual Fall San  
Antonio Train Show, Live Oak  
Civic Center

# THE ORDERBOARD *from Houston N'Crowd*

## Tom Marsh, Editor

Published fairly regularly for  
members and friends of  
N'Crowd Model Railroad  
Society, Inc., Houston, Texas.

Send newsletter contributions to:

tom@houstonNcrowd.org.

Please note: We reserve the right  
to edit submissions for clarity  
and length.

Visit our Web site:

[www.houstonNcrowd.org](http://www.houstonNcrowd.org)

Copyright © 2012 N'Crowd  
Model Railroad Society, Inc.