



News from Houston N'Crowd



July/August 2015

THE ORDERBOARD



To the Golden Triangle via Arkansas

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"GREEN EYE" - CLEAR BLOCK

by Vincent Walker, President

Plenty more to come in 2015!

We are already in the middle of the year, and yes, as I get older time does fly by. Now that we have the layout in better running condition, there are some upkeep and layout/layout room cleaning chores that need to take place. And if that's not enough for you, we have plenty of other fun events planned, too.

We have talked about completing the backdrops along the layout walls with shallow building flats. However, the old buildings that we thought we might use are not going to work out, so we need to give them away or just get rid of them. We need to do some repairs and cleaning on scenery in some areas, and we need a good housecleaning of the layout room. We'll be setting dates for these activities at upcoming meetings, so be sure to attend.

We had an operations session on Aug. 5 with a good turnout; see the photos elsewhere in this newsletter. I would like to see more folks attending the operating sessions and our other activities. If you pay your dues every year but are a no-show, it would be nice to see your face every now and then! You are always welcome on Saturdays to run trains, or just spend an hour or two relaxing with friends and talking about your latest modeling efforts, that locomotive that won't run and the like. It's all good fun for everyone!

We have quite a few activities in October, including a invitation to visit Greg Johnson's home layout, a barbeque at Zube Park, home of the Housotn Area Live Steamers (HALS) and an operating session on Oct 7. However, our visit to the DeQuincy Railroad Museum and Amtrak train ride has had to be postponed until next

spring. On the positive side, this should let us schedule the trip to include the Louisiana Railroad Days Festival in DeQuincy.

It would be nice to have a good turnout at Greg's open house on Oct. 10, as this is just for N'Crowd members and their guests. We'll meet at Greg's at noon. Also, we are inviting the Northwest Crossing Model Railroad Club to join us for the Oct. 17 barbeque at Zube Park, so plan to mingle and have fun. Lunch will be ready about noon, but show up earlier if you like and check out what HALS is doing. Check the back page of this newsletter for information about more events of interest.

Lastly, our July meeting was noticed by our store host, Allyn Pearlman. We forgot to put our chairs back and straighten up items we moved. He was nice about it, but in the future, let's please remember to clean house after meetings.

Until next time, happy railroading!

Vincent

Houston N'Crowd 2015 Officers and Volunteers

President	Vincent Walker
Vice President	Samuel Townsel II
Secretary	James Senneff, Jr.
Treasurer	Eddie Aycock
Board Member (2015)	Justin Coder
Board Member (2016)	Al Hague
Board Member (2017)	Richard Bartlett
Layout Master	Al Hague
Editor & Webmaster	Tom Marsh



N'Crowd Wednesday Membership Meetings:
July 15 / August 19 / September 16 / October 21

BC&G Operating Sessions:
August 5 / October 7 / December 2

Most activities take place at Papa Ben's Train Place, 4007-E Bellaire Blvd. Our monthly membership meetings and the BC&G Wednesday operating sessions start at 7 p.m. Come earlier to join us for dinner!

**Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
April 15, 2015
Prepared by James C. Senneff, Jr. - Secretary**

President Vincent A. Walker called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

President's Report: The next meeting is May 20, 2015, at Papa Ben's at 7:00 p.m. No door prizes or club cars to be auctioned at this meeting.

Vice President's Report: Not in attendance.

Treasurer's Report: Not in attendance.

Secretary's Report: Secretary James C. Senneff, Jr. reported that 14 members were in attendance: Dejan Suskavcevic, Barry Miles, Tom Wayburn, Randy Ollett, Tom Marsh, Richard Bartlett, Steve Lancaster, James Senneff, Jr., Vincent Walker, John Sweigart, Joe Kingsberry, Dominic Valdez, Harvey Stalarow and Ray Byer.

New Business: Eric Baugham is preparing for the crawfish boil on April 18 at Zube Park. Vincent Walker took notes on who would be at the crawfish boil. Vincent brought club shirts to show. Harvey confirmed that the shirts will be \$25 and must be prepaid by cash or check. Checks should be made to the N'Crowd. Embroidering is \$8 if you supply your own shirt. The shirts have pockets. Tom Marsh started a discussion on where to place the N'Crowd logo on the shirts. No final decision on placement of the logo was made at this meeting. The finalization of the order will be made in May since there were so many members missing at April's N'Crowd meeting. After that, you will have to mail in the order for the shirt with the payment.

Tom Marsh asked all club members to please turn in submissions on time for the newsletter. He has no new information on the club train trips for this year. Most likely it will be in September or October. One option is a bus ride from Houston to the DeQuincy, La., Railroad Museum and then a train ride back from Lake Charles, La. to Houston. The trip would cost about \$60 per person including bus and rail fare. The bus would leave around 7:30 a.m. from the downtown train station. The train would return around 6:18 p.m. the same day.

The club voted unanimously to reimburse Joe Kingsberry for a decoder that he purchased for one of the club's locomotives.

Vince started a conversation about N'Crowd monthly meeting reminders. Tom Marsh informed him that he already sends out meeting reminders by e-mail to all members that have given the club their e-mail address. Many members confirmed that they have been receiving the meeting reminders. The meeting schedule is also in the newsletter.

Tom Marsh gave information about T&NO locomotive No. 982 that is in downtown Houston. The proposed museum project that would have housed the locomotive has failed, and the city approached Gulf Coast Chapter NRHS about taking the locomotive, which has no tender as the tender was given to an out-of-state group. The person who had the engine said that they gave away an oil tank car, not the locomotive. Tom said that it would

take about \$60,000 to move the locomotive to the new location. The Gulf Coast Chapter NRHS board is considering whether to take possession of Engine 982.

Two NMRA LSR Division 8 clinics will take place on the third Saturday of upcoming months. The first will be at Spring Creek BBQ in the Stuebner Airline/FM 1960 area; this is on DCC wiring and tricks. The second will be at Odyssey Hobbies in Clear Lake on how to model graffiti on rail cars without decals. Two more clinics are planned but not scheduled yet.

Upcoming N'Crowd clinics:

May - Dejan Suskavcevic will show how to set up JMRI to use with a cell phone.

June - Gordon Bliss and Eddie Aycock will do an information session on their trip to Australia.

July - Vincent Walker will show more painting tips.

August - Joe Kingsberry will demonstrate painting and weathering.

September - Samuel Townsel II will discuss 3-D track planning.

Old Business: Ray Byer gave a report on the layout. The layout wiring has been worked on and the layout is running. There is a problem with the crossover from Englewood Yard and Gulf; a reversing section is in the area that should not be. Trains can cross-over in one spot but cannot crossover into Gulf. It was asked if one of the crossovers could be removed and Ray B. said no. He explained that two crossovers would have to be removed in the area. One solution would be to not meet the club's minimum six-foot length requirement for a siding. Ray discussed other solutions. A vote will be taken at next month's meeting so that more members will be in attendance to help decide.

Ray also said that although the layout is running, there is a problem with the turnout near the Greyhound Bus Terminal that is buried in the "concrete" road. Vincent said that the switch should just be replaced. Ray requested that if members see any more problems to write them down on the check-out sheet.

Vincent Walker moved to adjourn; seconded by James Senneff, Jr. The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

**Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
May 20, 2015
Prepared by James C. Senneff, Jr. - Secretary**

President Vincent A. Walker called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

President's Report: The next meeting is June 17, 2015, at Papa Ben's at 7:00 p.m.

The winners of the door prizes were: Steve Lancaster, covered hopper; John Sweigart; gondola; Tom Wayburn; gondola; James C. Senneff, Jr.; Shell tank car; Samuel Townsel II; spine car; Al Hague; center beam car; Dejan Suskavcevic; boxcar. Club cars auctioned: Al Hague, UP center beam car w/wood load, \$9; Bill Belsher; BC&G boxcar, \$7; Samuel Townsel II, covered hopper, \$9.

Vice President's Report: None.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Eddie Aycock reported as of Jan. 31, 2015, the club has \$11,118.00 cash and a CD of \$4,819.00. We have collected \$914.00 and have spent \$585.00. We are \$328.00 ahead for the year. Eddie has received some money for club shirts, so he will get with Charlie Aselin on ordering details.

Secretary's Report: Secretary James C. Senneff, Jr. reported 18 members in attendance: Dejan Suskavcevic, Bill Belcher, Tom Wayburn, Michael Bodak, Tom Marsh, Richard Bartlett, Steve Lancaster, James Senneff, Jr., Kyle Senneff, Ted Davis, Gordon Bliss, Vincent Walker, Al Hague, Eddie Aycock, John Sweigart, Samuel S. Townsel, II, Charlie Aselin, and Ray Byer.

New Business: The crawfish boil on April 18 at Zube Park was cancelled due to bad weather. We were going to reschedule but due to the crawfish season being almost over we decided to have a barbeque at Zube Park in October. We will also invite the Northwest Crossing Model Railroad Club.

A model railroad swap meet will take place in Tomball on Oct. 24. Tom Marsh will confirm the details of the swap meet so that the date for the barbeque can be set. President Walker said that we will set a date for the barbeque at the next N'Crowd meeting.

Vince Walker reminded everyone that Allyn Pearlman is providing the club layout room for free. Vince asked if we have done anything recently to show our appreciation and the answer was no. Vince heard that Allyn likes lobster so we will give him a gift certificate to Truluck's Restaurant to show our appreciation. The club voted to give Allen a \$100 gift certificate to Truluck's and \$100 for someplace else. Vince also mentioned that some members still need name tags. Eddie Aycock said that he has a list of four names of members who need name tags. Eddie will email the names to Vince and he will get the name tags made.

Vince asked the club members to show more participation on Saturdays to show support for the club and the store. You don't necessarily need to run trains, just show up and interact with visitors so that Allyn knows that we appreciate his graciousness for giving us the room for the club layout.

Ted Davis proposed that we have membership cards as other clubs do. A discussion about the positives of having a card followed. It was mentioned that we already have badges. The discussion was tabled for now.

Missouri Pacific Historical Society to meet in Houston

The Missouri Pacific Historical Society will hold its 2015 annual convention in Houston on Oct. 8-11. The host facility will be the Hilton Houston Southwest on the Southwest Freeway near Hillcroft Ave. Convention details will be released soon. For more information about MPHS, go to www.mopac.org.

Eddie Aycock reported there were three guys that were active last year that are not this year. Eddie gave the names and asked if anyone knows any of them to please reach out and encourage them to rejoin.

Upcoming N'Crowd clinics:

July - Vincent Walker will show more painting tips.

August - Joe Kingsberry will demonstrate painting and weathering.

September - Samuel Townsel II will discuss 3-D track planning.

Old Business: Ray Byer provided an update on the layout. After rewiring the layout, he discovered a reverse loop formed by the mainline crossovers at Englewood Yard. It starts in the corner coming out of Gulf leading into Englewood, so it is shorter than the six-ft. club minimum specification. Ray called Digitrax and was informed that there are two options to deal with the issue: Remove the two switches in question or expand the reversing section and add an auto-reverser to meet the required six-ft. minimum track length. A discussion followed about possible options to fix the issue. Ray said that we could discuss it after the meeting but the results will be the same. Apparently the best way to fix it is to put in the auto-reverser.

Ray asked the Club how the layout is running. Richard Bartlett said that the layout is running well with two minor issues: First, the electrical contact at the switch buried in "concrete" by the modern building near the bus station is unreliable. Richard has tried wire brushing it and other things, to no avail, and sometimes locomotives have to be pushed over the dead spot. Ray and Gordon said that the switch will have to be fixed in place due to the "concrete" and they have an idea how to fix it. Ray will look into it. Second is completion of the revisions to the curve at Austin. Ray noted that we have been tabling that one for a while. Ray said that there are three issues with the Austin curve. Vince noted that the discussion could wait until we go to the layout room after the meeting.

President Walker asked people not to leave right after the meeting because we have a clinic and a show-n-tell from Eddie and Gordon's trip to Australia.

Tom Marsh said that on Monday, Tomball City Council voted to accept the contract from Gulf Coast Chapter NRHS to establish the new chapter railroad museum on city property adjacent to Depot Park in Tomball. The chapter also has a verbal commitment from BNSF to assist in moving the equipment onto the property. Now the only thing needed is an additional \$1.2 million. Gulf Coast Chapter also told the City of Houston that the group is not interested in the T&NO steam engine because city officials want the engine to stay in the city and the chapter would want to move it to Tomball. Tom says that the Friends of 982 is reorganizing to preserve, restore and/or display. Vince said that is his understanding as well and the group is trying to find a replacement tender for the original, which was given away by the city.

Ray Byer said that NMRA LSR Division 8 is starting clinics again. The next clinic on June 20 on modeling graffiti has been moved to Deer Park at the home of one of the members due to Odyssey Hobbies closing. Ray will forward the information to Tom Marsh so that he can put it in the next newsletter. Tom said that the newsletter will be out in the next two weeks.

President Vincent Walker moved to adjourn; seconded by Tom Marsh. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

**Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
June 17, 2015
Prepared by James C. Senneff, Jr. - Secretary**

President Vincent A. Walker called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

President's Report: The next meeting is July 15, 2015, 2015 at Papa Ben's at 7:00 p.m.

The winners of the door prizes were as follows: Tom Marsh, covered hopper; Ted Davis, BC&G boxcar; Steve Lancaster; BC&G boxcar; Al Hague, Palmet Soo covered hopper. No club cars were auctioned.

Vice President's Report: None.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Eddie Aycock reported the club has \$11,273.00 in cash and \$4,819.00 in CDs. We are \$483 ahead for the year. Eddie reported a new member application from Bill Wright, who Vince said had joined the club during a visit to the store.

Secretary's Report: Secretary James C. Senneff, Jr. reported 16 members in attendance: Dejan Suskavcevic, Tom Wayburn, Randy Ollett, Tom Marsh, Julius Carr, Steve Lancaster, James Senneff, Jr., Kyle Senneff, Ted Davis, Vincent Walker, Al Hague, Eddie Aycock, John Sweigart, Harvey Stalarow, Joseph Kingsberry and Fred Keal.

New Business: President Walker initiated a discussion about the layout, saying as far as he knows the layout wiring repairs are complete and now the track needs to be cleaned. Layout Master Al Hague will address the cleaning. Al said that some areas need to be scened now that the layout is running. Vince said a scenery crew needs to be brought together and that there needs to be a cleaning crew for the layout room. There will be no new scenery at the yard at this time. Al said that he would come in on Saturday and starting cleaning up the floor. Al said that he would put together what needs to be done scenery-wise and then we can decide who will be asked to complete it.

Vince said that Eddie Aycock emailed him a list of people that need name tags. Vince will confirm who has paid and send those names to Office Max to get the tags made.

Harvey Stalarow said that he is in contact with the shirt printer. Tomorrow he will know the status of the shirts and he will email everybody. He requested payment from the people that ordered shirts and have not paid yet.

Ted Davis noted there are still tacks on the layout that indicate problems. Ted got with Ray Byer to ask him about them and he said that he does not know why they are there. Vince explained that the tacks are there to indicate that there is a problem with the wiring of the layout. No one at the meeting knows if there is a reason for any of the current tacks on the layout. Vince said that

Ray needs to come back and check the area with tacks and then remove them.

Greg Johnson is opening his home layout to the club again. Vince said that everyone should bring their spouses to see the layout. It is in a separate building with a toilet away from the main house and is really nice. The tour will be Saturday, Oct. 10, at a time to be determined. Vince would like a head count; current count is nine. Greg Johnson has some trees from the manufacturer from China named "We Honest". Vince says that the quality is good and with the amount of trees that you get for the money, you can't go wrong.

The barbeque is now scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 17 at Zube Park. We will also invite the Northwest Crossing Model Railroad Club. Tom Wayburn said that he would get with Northwest Crossing club and find out what their interest is and try to get a head count. Vince said that it would be nice for Northwest Crossing to supply some funds since we are supplying funds for the food for our members.

There is also going to be a model railroad swap meet in the Tomball Community Center on Saturday, Oct. 24; 20 tables will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Tom Marsh will have further details after arrangements are final. Tom Marsh also said that the Amtrak train trip is flexible in October. The bus company does not want to give any firm prices this early. The club has the bus trip and train ride tentatively set for Saturday, Oct. 31, which is the only available Saturday left in October. Tom Marsh said he would check on it, but he does not think it is a problem.

Al Hague reported that Barry Boggs and his son Blake came by his house with an offer. Blake is going back to college. He entrusted Al with some N-scale Kato snap track, cars and buildings that he has acquired. He would like to sell the small buildings for \$12 per building. Al thought that maybe members would like to purchase any buildings the club did not want. There are some bigger buildings for \$15.00, and the biggest ones for \$20.00. A discussion took place and it was decided the buildings offered were mainly retail buildings. Tom Marsh believes that the club needs mainly industrial buildings. Ted Davis proposed that he would pay \$160 for the 12 small retail buildings. Al decided to let Ted purchase the 12 buildings. Al said that there are about 30 cars. The cars were reviewed and the club has enough cars so they will be auctioned to the members. Al wanted to make it clear that he does not make any money on this; all the money goes to Blake. Al had the cars available for inspection.

Upcoming Clinics:

July - Joe Kingsberry will demonstrate painting and weathering.

August - Samuel Townsel II discuss 3-D track planning.

Old Business:

Vince apologized that he will not be able to do the painting clinic tonight. We will rearrange the clinic schedule.

Motion to adjourn made by Tom Marsh and seconded by James Senneff, Jr. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

**Houston N'Crowd
Membership Meeting Report
July 15, 2015**

Prepared by Samuel Townsell II - Vice President

President Vincent A. Walker called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Door Prizes: Vincent Walker, Steve Lancaster, Tom Marsh, Tom Wayburn and Al Hague.

President's Report: None

Vice President's Report: The refinery project will resume with a projected substantial completion date in November 2015.

Treasurer's Report: \$11, 282.02 in the checking account; \$4,819.25 in the CD; \$700.00 in dues paid to date; \$113.00 YTD in club car sales; \$345.00 YTD in donations; \$491.98 YTD ahead of expenditures.

Secretary's Report: Secretary was absent. Vice President Samuel Townsell acting secretary. 15 members in attendance.

New Business: Several members have outstanding balances for new club shirts. See Harvey Stalarow to pay outstanding balances and/or make new shirt orders. The new badges have arrived. See Eddie to receive your badge.

Al Hague has concerns about the layout. His main concern was what to do along the Englewood Yard. If there are buildings the club can or will use, let's place them. If not, let's distribute unused club buildings as door prizes. Ray addressed the defective DB100. Samuel has sent the command station to Digitrax for repairs. The short around the turnout in downtown Bayou City may be a loose rail joiner. Ray will address that issue. There is a green push pin in the passenger siding in the same area. More information is needed to why this push pin has been placed.

Vince needs a head count for the barbeque at Zube Park on Oct. 17, 2015. Tom Wayburn will coordinate with the NWX club.

NMRA LSR Division 8 will hold their elections on Sept. 26, 2015, at Zube Park. The division is also holding a clinic this coming weekend at the Spring Cypress BBQ 1960/Stubner Airline location; Topic is how to build a car with sound.

Gordon Bliss will have an open house next Wednesday and Sunday for people attending the NMRA LSR Division 8 convention in Beaumont, Texas.

Old Business: Greg Johnson is hosting the club at his home layout on Oct. 10, 2015. Vince needs to have a head count.

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.



August operating session

by Vincent A. Walker

The August BC&G operating session attracted a small group, but everyone had fun running trains. Attendees were Trainmasters Eddie Aycock and Gordon Bliss, Dejan Suskavcevic, Randy Ollet, Mike Wellmer and his son Patrick, and your N'Crowd president. Everything ran well, but we could not find all the rechargeable batteries for the throttles. Please remember, if you remove a battery for some reason, please put it back.

The next operating session is set for Oct. 7.



Welcome, all!

A few words from the President to our younger members

I would like to say to the young (and new) folks, having you join the club is a great investment in our model railroad hobby. Welcome!

Your membership gives you access to the club's model railroad at Papa Ben's Train Place as well as the invitation to participate in all of our events. With your membership you are taking the step from playing with trains to becoming a model railroader. And as a model railroader, you have more responsibilities.

Good manners in the layout room are very important. Our space is provided free of charge by Mr. Allyn Pearlman, the store owner. In return for the space to have our model railroad, we are expected to run trains for the store's visitors every Saturday. You are welcome to run trains any Saturday the store is open. Everyone who runs trains on Saturday follows some simple rules, and respects both the store owner and other club members who are spending time enjoying the trains.

You can bring your own train or run one of the club's trains. When your train is ready to leave the yard or the passenger station, you need to tell everyone else who is running a train that you are ready to pull out. Do not stop another train if it is not yours. Let the other train pass yours then flip the track switches you need to move your train to the mainline. Make sure you throw the switches back so the trains don't derail when they cross it later!

Now that you are running your train on the mainline, you need to make sure it runs at a speed that matches the other trains so you don't cause a collision. Also, you should plan to run your train for a number of trips around the layout. We don't want to change trains or pull out different trains every five or ten minutes, as this does not give the best show for visitors who are watching the trains.

You will have an opportunity to run different trains during our operating sessions, which take place every other month. In an operating session, trains are run just like they run on a real railroad. Freight cars are dropped off and picked up at various towns, and passenger trains stop on schedule at the different passenger stations. Once you have finished one run as the engineer, you

may have the chance to start another. This is a fun way to learn how a railroad works!

Sometimes we are tempted to run our trains too fast. Model railroaders learn to run their trains at scale speeds, not as if the train is on a racetrack. If we have to ask anyone to slow their train down three times, they will be asked to step away from the throttle.

If you bring your own train it must run around the layout without any issues. If you are having trouble with your train, ask another club member to help you. We will be happy to try to fix the problem or let you know what you need to do.

Every railroader needs to be safety conscious! Do not run or horseplay in the club room or the store, as you may hurt yourself if you trip, or hurt someone else if you run into them. You could also damage the layout or even your own train if you are not careful.

We want everyone to have fun and respect and love the hobby of model railroading. We want everyone young and old to love the hobby. Remember, there is a lot more to this hobby than just running trains. You will make good friends while you grow with the hobby and pass it on to others.

I hope to see you soon running trains on our own Bayou City & Gulf Railroad. Happy railroading!

Vincent Walker
President



San Antonio station scene

photos by Vincent C. Walker

N'Crowd President Vincent A. Walker and son Vincent C. recently had the opportunity to spend a little time at the former SP Sunset Route station in San Antonio, and they shared these photos with *The Orderboard*. Thanks, guys!



Above and below, one of the station's stained glass windows from the outside and the inside. This window was hidden behind a plaster covering for many years, as Southern Pacific had adapted the location in the station to hold communications equipment in a climate-controlled environment.



At right top, SP 2-8-2 on display at the former SP station in San Antonio. Above, Amtrak Superliner coaches laying over at the station. Depending on the day of the week, Amtrak's Sunset Limited and Texas Eagle drop off and pick up cars in San Antonio. Amtrak passengers do not use the original station anymore. A new Amtrak facility opened immediately to the west of the Sunset Route station in 1998.

To the Golden Triangle via Arkansas *by Tom Marsh*



Amtrak's westbound Sunset Limited crosses the Neches River at Beaumont on Saturday, July 25. The NMRA LSR region convention schedule permitted those inclined to do so to do some railfanning in the area. Beaumont's Riverfront Park provides an excellent view of the bridge.

The NMRA Lone Star Region held its annual convention July 22-26 in Beaumont. This marked the first time the regional meet has been held in the south-east Texas area known as the "Golden Triangle". The convention, which was attended by just over 100 people, was organized by members of LSR Division 8. The five-day convention, dubbed the "TexLa Doodlebug" in recognition of Beaumont's history as a hub for railroad "doodlebug" (motor car) operations during the early to mid-20th century, covered a lot of ground, both in terms of model railroad activities and prototype tours.

The prototype tours took in the Rescar Companies full-service tank and hopper car repair facility and the engine servicing facilities of shortline Sabine River & Northern, both in nearby Orange, Texas. Both facilities provided insight into aspects of modern railroading that can translate into details on a layout.

Clinic topics ranged from model railroading how-to presentations on modeling trees and rust, operations and DCC wiring, to presentations on historical and modern subjects, including the cotton and lumber industries in Texas, the operations of a large car fleet owner (in this case, ExxonMobil), and the trains owned by Walt Disney and his associated theme parks. This

well-received presentation was made by 12-year old Sam Nicastro, who has been an NMRA member since the age of three.

The contest showcased some of the region's finest modeler's talents, but N-scale was represented only by entries in the display/modules category. N-scale was well-represented among the various modular layouts that were set up at the host hotel.

A banquet presentation by Dr. John B. McCall, well-known author and doodlebug operations expert, rounded out the event. Dr. McCall's presentation included a number of unpublished photographs of doodlebugs in action on various former Southern Pacific, Santa Fe and Frisco lines in Texas and Louisiana, with an emphasis on operations in Southeast Texas and western Louisiana.

Our trip to Beaumont was by way of Springdale, Ark., home of the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad and its Alco locomotive fleet. This route also gave us the opportunity to check out the Kansas City Southern mainline in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma.

The next NMRA Lone Star Region convention will take place June 22-25, 2016, in Arlington, Texas, with the theme "Daylight Express 2016".



NMRA members look on as Rescar Companies employees conduct routine maintenance on a Stewart & Stevenson Rail King car mover. The Rescar shop in Orange was one of the prototype facilities toured during the NMRA LSR annual convention.



Above left, the interior blast shop, where product contaminants and damaged or old internal coatings are removed from inside the cars.

Left, A Rescar manager explains what all those things are inside a pressurized tank car dome. The domes and associated piping are regularly removed when a tank car undergoes heavy maintenance.

At top above, the tank car cleaning rack; water and other materials are recycled for use at the facility. Hazardous materials are disposed of by a third party contractor.

Above, this rolled steel is used for tank car shell repairs.



Above, convention attendees had full run of the Sabine River & Northern shop facility in Orange, probably because the shortline's two operating locomotives were out on the road. This would be an easy facility to model. Two chop nose Geeps were at the shop. The red and white unit on the cover and above is being held while the railroad decides whether or not to rebuild or scrap it. The other unit in the older paint scheme has already been sold for scrap.



At right above, both of the T-Trak modules entered in the contest won awards.

At right and below, on our roundabout route to Beaumont we saw action on Kansas City Southern's mainline through the Ozarks in Arkansas and Oklahoma; Alcos in freight service on the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad; and restored Fort Smith Light & Traction trolley No. 224, which is operated by the Fort Smith Trolley Museum.



LCL

Less than Car Load: a few notes from your editor

Going for a world record?: The San Antonio N-Trak Association (SANTRAK) may take a stab at setting a T-Trak world record during the World's Greatest Hobby show in February in San Antonio. They will need a lot of modules, so if you've been interested in building a T-Trak module or two, this might be a good excuse to get busy! We'll have more information on the record-setting effort soon. The World's Greatest Hobby show is scheduled for Feb. 20-21 at San Antonio's Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center. You can find more information on Facebook or at www.wghshow.com.

Swap meet at NWX: Northwest Crossing Model Railroad Club is sponsoring a swap meet on Saturday, Aug. 29, at their Northwest Mall club room. The event will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and vendor tables

are free. Contact John Ruehle by email at CoolRuehle@yahoo.com for more information.

Galveston Railroad Museum Train Show: The Galveston Railroad Museum 2015 Train Show will take place Oct. 3-4. Dealer tables are available at \$25 for 8-ft. and \$20 for 6-ft. Electrical hookups are also available. Free parking will be provided.

More swap meet: Can't have too many! Gulf Coast Chapter NRHS will sponsor a model railroad/railroadiana swap meet in conjunction with its annual railroad photography contest on Saturday, Oct. 24, at the Tomball Community Center. Tables are available for non-commercial sales (groups or individuals) at no charge. Email txtr7@yahoo.com for more information.

HOUSTON N'CROWD TIME TABLE

July 15

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

July 22-25

NMRA Lone Star Region Convention, Beaumont

July 25-26

SAMRA Summer Family Train Show, San Antonio

August 5

Wednesday BC&G Operating Session, 7 p.m.

August 19

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

August 29

NWX swap meet, Northwest Mall. Information: John Ruehle at CoolRuehle@yahoo.com

September 16

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

September 19

CentraMod Model Train Show, Temple

October 3-4

Galveston Railroad Museum Train Show

October 7

Wednesday BC&G Operating Session, 7 p.m.

October 10-11

TWMRRC Annual Train Show, Forest Hill Civic & Convention Center (Fort Worth area)

October 21

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

October 24

Gulf Coast Chapter NRHS swap meet and photo contest, Tomball Community Center. Information: txtr7@yahoo.com

October 31-November 1

New Braunfels Railroad Museum Fall Train Show

THE ORDERBOARD *from Houston N'Crowd*

Tom Marsh, Editor

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

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