

KEEPING TRACK

Official Newsletter of the Abilene Society of Model Railroaders

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Editor: Jim Gibson

The Word From the Prez

Don't Forget Model Railroading During the Summer Activities

As we approach the halfway point of 2009, I see a lot of good things going on in ASMR. We now have a donated N-scale layout that our members have been working on. Next, we have member interest in building some new modules that can be added to our HO modular display layout, or could fill in for some of the existing modules if their owners aren't able to participate in one of our public events. We will have an opportunity to set up all of our modules at the Baird Trade Days on June 27th.

We also have additional members that are showing an interest in Operating Sessions. I was a little disappointed that only two people showed up for the initial operating session on my layout, but I guess you have to start somewhere, and I hope the participation will be better next time we schedule one. I know that summer will be busy with families taking vacations and working on our homes and gardens, and train modeling may have to take a back seat. But, hopefully you won't put model railroading totally aside during the next two or three months. I love doing things outdoors during the summer, but I also love time indoors (where it is cool) working on model railroad projects. The nice thing about our hobby is that it can be enjoyed year round. I hope you'll spend at least some time keeping up with what's going on in the club, and devote a little time to dreaming this summer. Who knows what good ideas and projects you may come up with.

Your President, Ken Riediger

ASMR Meeting Notes

The May 2, 2009 business meeting was called to order by Pres. Ken Riediger at 10:03 a.m. Minutes for the April 4 meeting were read by Sec'y. Cody Hilliard and approved. Treas. Ken England's report, which stated that the total club asset balance was \$3,946.44, was also approved. Ken R. started the meeting by proclaiming the April 18 operating session on Jim Norwood's layout a success. Ken England added that he is working to set up another

session at Norwood's on August 15 or 22. Brenda Turner said she is still working on the car wash fundraiser idea, so it was tabled again. Ken R. said he received a request for the club to participate in the Baird Trade Days event on June 27. The traveling layout would be set up in a secure outdoor pavilion this time, instead of the depot, and members gave a tentative yes vote pending a check on the site by Ken. He then proposed having regular informative and/or entertaining programs at monthly meetings, and designating a program director to set them up. This would be similar to what the Lubbock model railroad club did when Ken was a member there. Members seemed interested and tossed around some ideas. Keith Savage and John Turner volunteered to do a demonstration on module construction at the next meeting. Ken R. asked members for input on what kind of programs they would like to see or do, but no final decision was reached on setting up a formal program arrangement. (Note: To try and set an example, after the meeting Ken R. gave an interesting demonstration on re-decating cars and engines.) The July meeting, which would normally have fallen on July 4, was moved to July 11. Ken R. proposed the idea of having an operating session on his home layout, and when several showed interest, a date for one was set for May 9, at 1:30 p.m. Ken E. said dues letters need to be sent to three members, discussed the club facility key situation, and asked for the numbers on the keys of those who have them. The meeting was closed at 10:45 a.m. by Pres. Riediger. Next meeting is set for June 6.

Update on ASMR Layouts

Thanks to Cody Hilliard, a long overdue major improvement to the HO layout's DCC system has finally been made. During one evening after work this month, when nobody else was around running trains, Cody put his electronic expertise to work and installed the DCC power booster Ken Riediger had purchased (with club authorization). The installation also involved dividing the layout into two power blocks, which should preclude the entire layout shutting down every time there is a short. It should also help prevent overload/shut-down situations from occurring when several

members are operating power-hungry, sound-equipped locomotives at the same time. Thanks, Cody, for the good work!

About a month or so ago, someone donated a 3 X 6-foot N-scale layout to the club. It has track and scenery, but the donor, who was leaving Abilene, removed his structures and details and took them with him. The layout is pretty much a Woodland Scenics "kit project" with the capability of running two trains at the same time on separate main lines. It looks like a nice start on an N-scale layout for those in the club who want to have one in this compact size. To help get the ball rolling, Ken England, with help from Jim Gibson and Nick Kenneally, installed sturdy legs on the layout framework, which came without any. With an eye toward moving the project along a little further, Jim Gibson, assisted by Walter Gramh, stripped all the structures, track and scenic details off of the old N-scale "figure eight" module built several years ago by Bill Hailey. It has been gathering dust for some time in storage above the wall in a back corner of the HO-scale layout room, and a number of items from it could be used on the donated layout. With a little imagination and some "elbow grease", this layout can be turned into a nifty little operating showpiece. All that's needed now is for some dedicated N-scalers to pick up the ball and get going!

The Editor Speaks

Having Programs = Good

Not Listening = Not So Good

At the May business meeting Ken Riediger proposed that the club have regular programs for the member's entertainment and edification. This idea seemed to generate a positive response among those who were present at the meeting. It sparked some suggestions for future programs, and even a couple of volunteers to do a demo on module building at the next meeting. To prove he was serious about the idea, after the formal meeting Ken did a program on how to clean off old decals and put new ones on rolling stock and locomotives. It was obvious he had put some thought and effort into preparing his

presentation, which included visual aids and reference materials. Unfortunately, some members who evidently weren't interested in the subject matter drifted into the main layout room and began running sound-equipped locos and socializing loud enough that it was difficult at times to hear Ken talking. Being the nice guy that he is, Ken ignored the distractions and soldiered on through his presentation for the benefit of those of us who *were* interested in his "show and tell". I think the idea of having programs after our monthly business meetings is a good one, because I'm certain we can benefit from the talents and expertise of other model railroaders. But, after seeing what happened during Ken's presentation, I'm not in favor of scheduling regular programs unless all members present are willing to extend to presenters the courtesy of being attentive, polite listeners. **JG**

ASMR Member Visits Utah's Historic Golden Spike Site

Nick Kenneally is currently spending some time in Utah on an Air Force assignment. While there, he is taking advantage of the opportunity to check out some of the local historical sites dedicated to preserving the rich, railroad-related heritage of the "Beehive State". From the looks of some of the sample photos he emailed recently showing Promontory Point, where the Golden Spike ceremony celebrated the completion of the first transcontinental railroad, he is going to have some good stuff to share with us when he gets back. In fact, Nick has promised that he will provide a complete report, with fotos, for the club newsletter. Stay tuned!

Model RR Meets & Events

Jun. 27 – ASMR layout display at Baird Trade Days event, Baird, TX.

Aug. 15 – New Braunfels Summer Model Train Show, New Braunfels, TX.

Aug. 22 – TCA Lone Star Division Show, Plano, TX.

Sep. 19 – 27th Annual Temple Model Train Show, Temple, TX.

Don't Miss ASMR's Layout Display at Baird's Trade Days, June 27.