



## 2026 April Issue

### **BSG MINUTES FOR 3/22/26**

By Jeff Madden

**Present at the meeting:** Ray Puls, Doug Stoll, Wayne Friedrich, Jeff Madden, Ron Schlicht, Don Goeke, Jean Goeke, Steve Heineman, Tom Patterson, and Bob Blomberg.

**Treasurers Report:** The treasurer's report was given to President Ron Schlicht over the phone as Roy Meissner was unable to attend. The treasury is in good shape. A yearly budget will be discussed under New Business.

**Old Business:** Member Doug Stoll is still investigating the idea of a secure website. Along this line, Ray Puls and Roy Meissner will check out opening an interest-bearing CD or Money Market with a local bank for some of our funds are just currently in a straight savings account.

### **New Business:**

1. Ron Schlicht, President, gave a report on a projected budget for 2026. Expenses such as Associate Membership Dues to the Gandy Dancers, layout projects, badges and money owed American Models for the car re-order was discussed. In addition, the possibility of increasing income for the club through investing our current bank assets.
2. The purchase of a Lionel Legacy System from an estate was approved by the membership. This will give the 4 projected mainline loops on the club layout plenty of power and control.
3. The club is still trying to formalize the number of current members. It is estimated to be about 20 or maybe a little more.
4. The club voted to decline an offer of a large collection of American Flyer items as it would be coming from quite a distance, and dealing with shipping, storage and distribution seemed to be too much. The owner was contacted with suggestions to his location in California.

5. A new control panel needed for the club layout was discussed and preliminary plans were shown. The materials will be purchased or gathered to construct the panel that will enable switching from AC to DC via double-throw-center-off toggles so power flow can't be confused. Ray Puls, Don Goeke, Wayne Friedrich and Ron Schlicht will coordinate this.
6. President Ron Schlicht discussed ongoing club projects that will be coordinated with the HO Gandy Dancers. This included improving the G gauge window display, improving the upstairs entranceway with a "toy box" caboose and other railroad items, and putting up various large railroad art and displays throughout the club quarters. The object is to give the whole place a "museum" look. Ron Schlicht is coordinating this.
7. Also discussed was having our club and the Gandy Dancers work more closely with the Waukesha Downtown Business Association with the goal of getting more publicity out to the public about our layouts and open houses.
8. Tom Patterson gave a report on the 2025 Fall S Fest car re-order from American Models. The order is almost complete with a final count still to be determined. All those who ordered cars are covered with only a few extra cars to be determined. Tom was authorized to purchase some boxes from a local source; the cars will then be shipped to the purchasers. The shipping from AM to us is being discussed. Once that is taken care of, the cars will be mailed by BSG to the purchasers. Using USPS was approved by the members for this final shipping. Doug Stoll will put the progress of all this on Facebook in order to update those who ordered cars. Several hoppers from the 2021 FSF have also been sold with the help of the Facebook contacts.

9. Some discussion was held about the status of the various estate items the club is dealing with. Much of the many items will be sold at the various S shows such as the Indianapolis show in September and the Fall S Fest in Chicago of 2026. They are always at the clubhouse for interested individuals.

10. A final sad note was the passing of long-time member and S scale modeler, Larry Blank, who passed away this March, 2026, at age 81.

Meeting adjourned at 3 p.m. Next meeting is April 26th at 1:30 p.m. at the club house.

## Clubhouse Clatter

So, what's happening with the Badgerland S Gaugers Ray Puls reported that the March 7<sup>th</sup> open house session the open house was fairly well attended by the public, a number of adults and children visited the club house and stopped by the Badgerland and the HO layouts. Ray brought along his Thomas train set and Percy his Percy train set. Both of these are custom made for S gauge. This again points out the need for the planned two additional loops. With the recent addition of the passing siding there are more options for running various trains without having to remove those that are currently on the tracks.

## Editors Comments

I first met Larry Blank at one of the very early meetings in the formation of the Badgerland S Gaugers. At that meeting, At John Wickland's home there was the signing of the club charter, I believe that it was May of 1976. There were about 16 members present and the meeting. At that time BSG had about 30 members.

Little then did most of us really know one another. We also didn't know one another's skill sets. Larry was possibly the finest scale modeler ever in BSG.

Rarely does Model Railroader features S gauge layouts. Larry's scale layout was featured in the December 2017 issue of Model Railroader magazine. The 6-page article written by Dave Rickaby covered his S scale Ahnapee & Western, which was well-scenicked and had many scratch-built structures and bridges. Larry served as a Director for BSG for a number of years, he was also a member of the NASG. He retired as a printer from the American Bowling Congress. His attention to detail was remarkable. The complete layout had every inch, building details, building locations, every track location and even the mountain bluffs, on scaled drawings well before construction



even began. The drawings alone are incredible.

Larry hosted a number of our club meetings and his wife Deanna always had a great meal for us. We will eventually post some photos of his layout on our website. The picture shown is one of my favorites Larry will be missed by BSG and the model railroaders who appreciate a real craftsman.

At the Delavan show there was a G gauge setup. The owner donated a couple G gauge structures that will be added to the window display. The plan is to make it look more like a train layout, rather than just a train running on a carpet. Ron Schlicht is working on that project. With the train running on a motion detector, we hope that some notice will be made of the clubhouse. If you are aware of any items, be they trees, structures, figures or items that may fit into G gauge, and would like to donate them, contact Ron Schlicht.

In the last newsletter you saw the picture of the new club badge. One of these is available to any member who has paid their 2026 dues. If you want one contact Ron Schlicht as to how you want your name printed on the badge. They will be available at the clubhouse.

**A Reminder:** Starting Wednesday April 1st, this year, BSG will be open on every Wednesday night of every month, from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Last year the clubhouse was open during the Waukesha Friday Night Live events. We are not sure yet if this will be an option this year.

Although progress has been a little slow, work sessions have been taking place over the past few months. Every couple weeks there is something new or improved. With the assistance of the Gandy Dancers club members, additional LED lighting is being installed in our layout area.

I have been working on various signage for our club. Posters were made that are on display at the clubhouse and have been taken to model railroad events. Every attempt will be made to get the BSG information out there. I am also working with the Gandy Dancers HO club to increase advertising for both clubs



When visitors ask about how long the clubhouse, both past and present, have been in existence they are amazed that they never heard about them. That is on us.

If you have any suggestions on the info sheet that accompanied the last newsletter, please let me know.

## Special Editorial

# The Future of S Gauge

By Jeff Madden

Yes, folks, we are in a “down cycle”. We only have one active manufacturer for locos and rolling stock – American Models! Lionel has been bought out by the R2 group that produces plastic kits and lots of diecast toy cars. Lionel now has the new name of Lionel Group. Whether this group is going to promote “toy trains” is up in the air. Whether they will revise the AF line or dump it off is also up in the air???? Scale Trains recently gave a negative report on their sales of former SHS rolling stock they have produced after taking over from MTH. The report is that sales of the rolling stock is less-and-less percentage wise. They complain about short runs of S items (track, locos, etc.) that China is reluctant to do.

So, will Lionel Group spin off the AF line or bury it? So, will Scale Trains spin off the former MTH-SHS line or bury it? S modelers (scale, hi-rail, Flyer) all hope some “sugar daddy” will rescue these lines somehow.

Unfortunately, demographics is working against us in S. The bulk of model railroaders is getting older or dying off. Younger folks have tons of distractions for their spare time – mostly electronics. Estate sales of model railroad equipment are rampant. Even with declining numbers, the HO and N manufacturers still have enough volume of customers to keep them going. Lionel 3-rail may have enough customer volume to keep it going, but I suspect the market there is saturated. O scale 2-rail and S are at the bottom of the totem pole as far as numbers are concerned. Let’s hope for the best.

Basically, the model railroad industry is reluctant to offer new products that require new tooling for such things as locos, track and rolling stock. The 3D printing crowd is offering many short-run detail parts in S which is a good thing, but without track, locos and rolling stock in ready-to-run or basic kit form, then S will die out. Pray that American Models can continue to carry the torch.

There is a thought that AM or whoever (hopefully) ends up with the Flyer and SHS tooling can at least re-issue popular items with new paint schemes or re-issue paint schemes that are out of stock but were popular when first issued.

If you look at the “S” swap meets like the Fest and Sprees you notice plenty of scale S, hi-rail and Flyer items for sale, especially Flyer. Most of these are in the popular “transition” era. S scale and hi-rail track, turnouts and structures have limited exposure at these meets with the exception of some estate sales.

So, what might create the excitement needed to open up some wallets for S? Yes, 3d printing of details, some rolling stock and even some structures are leading the

way now, but mostly these items are only exposed online and rarely do you see them at shows where things can be seen and purchased in person. Not everybody likes buying things online. So, what is needed is steadier and consistent production of the basics – locos, rolling stock and track. This would include the “transition era items”, but also, more modern era equipment. I know we all hate the “buy it now, or you’ll never see it again” philosophy. A side thought is that if anybody produces S locomotives could they produce them ready-to-run with dead rail electronics? This could be a pioneer spark that moves S up the ladder.

The other big hope is that current big manufacturers of O, HO and N just might take a chance that S (the perfect size) might see that scale as an opportunity to expand instead of fighting over the markets they already have. Somebody like Scale Trains, Bachmann, the new Lionel Group, Atlas, Athearn, etc., needs to take the bull by the horn.

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## 2025 Fall S Fest Car Reorder

For those who may be anxiously waiting for the reorder of the Milwaukee Road 2025 Fall S Fest cars, American Models has informed Tom Patterson, that the cars are in the packaging process. We will then either pick up the cars or have them shipped to us for distribution.

The success of the car was surprising. In total slightly over 300 cars will have been manufactured to fulfill the cars that were sold. We are awaiting the total cars made on the third order. There may be a very small number more than we ordered.

If anyone has any questions contact Tom Patterson: email [tpatterson31@wi.rr.com](mailto:tpatterson31@wi.rr.com).

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## Delavan Train Show

BSG was represented by the “Hollywood Meets Model Railroading” layout. The attendance was around 3,700 for the two-day event. We were given two six-foot tables on each end of the layout which gave us a place to put out as much literature as we had, could have used more.

This year BSG was very close to passing up this show. Paul Bartelak came up ill and was not going to be available for setup and Bob Blomberg had another event already scheduled. It is impossible for me to set up the layout by myself. One day prior canceling Fred Vergenz called telling me that he took a day’s vacation to help me. Paul, Fred and I were there Saturday and Sunday. Tom Patterson came Sunday to help out with

the teardown. His coming enabled us to load up in near record time. The show coordinators son was also helped out two days. The Delavan committee is planning on an even a bigger, city-wide event for next year and are begging that we come back. The layout has often appeared in the local newspapers in the area.

The layout is our only way to attract attention to our club. The rumor is circulating that this may be the last show for BSG, as I am approaching 85 years old. It will become fact unless we can recruit more help with the shows. We are now only attending only 3 shows per year. At every show we are always given a prime location for the layout.

Our presence at shows is imperative, if we hope to attract any new members for the club. With the three shows that the club participated in this past model railroading season, the total attendance figures was somewhere between 17,00 and 18,000. So far, interest in the layout is very high, but we have only gotten one new member.

Whether you like the theme or not, it continues to be one of the major draws at all of the shows. Yes, it has high number of “Groupies”.

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### Some ending editorial comments:

Our last meeting was one of our more productive gatherings that we have had in a while. Some of those attending not only made valuable suggestions, but actually volunteer to carry them through.

In the past we have had individuals with a lot of ideas, **for other people to do**, but found themselves unable to participate in their great ideas.

There is a reminder in this newsletter about the Wednesday nights open club house. The first one was a **R&R** session. That didn't mean **Rest & Relaxation**, it stood for Ray and Ron. Well, the weather was not the greatest, so I am sure (hoping) that a better turnouts will occur when the weather gets better.

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## The Photo Shop

Every once and a great while, my wonderful wife decides to get me a gift for Christmas for my home layout. The usual problem is that I have no room for it. (Never take your wife to Menards and walk by the train supplies.) “But it is so cute” is the comment. So, guess what I got for Christmas one year.



The “cute” Ertl County Fair. This then absolutely **“forced me”** to expand my layout by 40 sq. ft. It also resulted in a lot more buildings and more people. The overall area of the fairgrounds is 24 inches deep by 51 inches in in length. In the grounds area are 492



### Ferris Wheel:

I painted and detailed the frame. I did not use the provided stickers. Instead, I got a real deal on yellow-colored rhinestones to simulate lighting. Added gold colored star stickers, safety bars and 33 riders each and every one painted differently. Unfortunately, I have not figured out a way to motorize it.



### Merry-Go-Round:

The horses come Red and Blue, each one is painted differently with saddles and bridle gear. The tough part was putting the riders on all of the horses. I painted the roof and base and used some of the stickers and added the rhinestones for effect



### Kiddie Car Ride:

Five Hallmark Miniature Christmas tree ornaments, a plastic coffee can lid, a clown cake decoration and a slotted bottle cap that I have no idea where it came from. I added a small pieces of plastic to attach the cars to the cap to made the attendants control box.



**Lemonade Stand:** Don't tell me that you never had one of these liquid lemon squeeze bottles in your refrigerator. Popsicle sticks for the awning, counter top and sign. Styrene strips to simulate a door on the back. Baby food jar lid for the base.



### The Exhibition Structure:

Apparently, this came in different roof colors as shown on the box. Plasticville barn ventilators and a canopy from a PV two story house are used for a flag and banners. I use a lot of 43<sup>rd</sup> scale Circus Craft sitting figures on my layout and in my vehicles. There are 53 people in the bleachers during the judging of the PV cows. I think that PV cow being judged is a Blue Ribbon Winner. Moo.



Marx newsstands are a nice little item if you want to take the time to do a detailed paint job. PV stuff for children's petting park.

### Porta-Poddies:

Materials: The body is a piece of wood from my basement, base scrap piece of plastic, roof six-inch plastic ruler for tapered look. I used a package of .030 by .125 Evergreen styrene the side detailing and small parts, stuff I had laying around. Door does not open "Occupied".



I made 5 of these, the only real cost was the package of styrene, of which I had plenty left for other projects. The cost of each amounted to about .60 cents each.

This could be downsized for S scale.

**The Game Stand:** This was from the utility shed that came with the PV farm accessories. A couple pieces of wood for the counter top and thin styrene for the trim pieces, a little paint and signs made on my computer finished it off. The cans were just some beads that I found and the balloons were a bunch of map pins. No teddy bears or stuffed animals are available for prizes.



“BSG Kit-Bashers” and members could send pictures of structures they scratch built or modified.

**Thanks to Jeff Madden** for his article on “The Future of S Gauge”.

## **The BSG Searchlight**

**WANTED:** SHS wood-sided reefers SHS #02123 Carling Black Label (CBL 799) and SHS #02124 Carling Black Label (CBL 812). New or Like New in Original Box; scale wheelsets installed or with scale wheelsets in box.

Contact: Tom Patterson email:

[tpatterson31@wi.rr.com](mailto:tpatterson31@wi.rr.com).

**WANTED:** Plasticville Cape Code House, Salmon Color, Brown Roof, Brown Doors and Windows.

Contact: Ron Schlicht email: [rons48tblue@gmail.com](mailto:rons48tblue@gmail.com)

**For Sale, “mint condition”,** prior to 1952, American Flyer accessories for sale. The proceeds from all sales will go to BSG. For info some of these items or photos contact: Ron Schlicht

**For Sale:** Plasticville structures and accessories, boxed and unboxed, plus a number of small parts. Some are available in different color variations. Contact Ron Schlicht: [rons48tblue@gmail.com](mailto:rons48tblue@gmail.com).

**With what BSG has on hand, it’s like a Mini-S Gauge Swap meet.** More S gauge than you see at most swap meets and at reasonable prices. More Items have been added in recent weeks. Admittedly, most are from S gauge suppliers tother than old American Flyer Trans. We may be posting some of these items on our website.

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## **Local Area Meets**

\*In the event that any of our members are aware of events that they believe would be of interest to other club members please contact your newsletter editor and we can post them.

**Lionel Swap Meets**  
**New Berlin Entertainment Center**  
**16000 West Cleveland Ave.**  
**New Berlin, WI**  
**8:00 am To 12:00 pm**  
**Admission \$4.00**

2026 The Lionel swap meets will resume in October  
Check website: [www.milw-lrrc.com](http://www.milw-lrrc.com)  
or call 262-754-9900

Open House November 29th & 30<sup>th</sup>

There are some additional structures that were made from “stuff” in the workshop. Also, some of the original pieces from the set were modified to make them blend in better.



**The ticket booth:** Again, small pieces of left over styrene with a roof that I have no idea what it came from.



**The Food Stand:** You can make a lot of small structures out of that one sheet of siding. PV windows, some styrene, computer sign and paint gives the McDonalds truck competition as a food vendor.

Comment: Weight Watchers next stop. I have no idea how many hits with a toothpick it took for that polka-dot dress. The picnic tables are HO skids with styrene strips for the support legs and seating.

All in all, outside of the basic Ertl set, there was not that much of a cost of materials. One of the strokes of luck was occasionally finding small packages of Ertl fencing at swap meets. It gave me a lot more than was provided with the original set. Let’s not talk about the cost of the figures.

**Postscript:** Classic Toy Trains did a two-page article in the 2011, May issue entitled, **How to model a county fair**. The article in this newsletter is a bit more comprehensive in the details of the total build. More structures and details were added. One sentence CTT used, referred to the sights and **smells** of a county fair. I don’t recall adding smells, that is unless, they were referring to me.

I may follow up with more unexpected “cute” ideas of my wife’s. Advice: Never hurt your wife’s feelings, even if you don’t like her ideas or gifts. Just Say Thank You Dear!

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The preceding article is what you get when you don’t send me any of your pictures. **Coming Attractions:** More Plasticville to use for building material.

**WARNING:** Unless you send me some of your pictures, you are just going to see more of mine.

Perhaps we can add a column entitled:

They are open to their members on many occasions during the week, For more information go to their website.

Shipping \$10.00 on 1st car. \$3.00 ea. additional car. The cars are also available at the BSG clubhouse.

**Wisconsin Southeastern Division Midwest Region (WISE) Meets)**

\*New Berlin Public Library  
15105 Library Lane  
New Berlin, WI  
1:00 pm  
\*Admission Free

**Mad-City Train Show**  
Location TBA \*April 18

Check website: <https://wisedivision.org>

**Great Midwest Train Show**  
DuPage County Fairgrounds Wheaton, IL  
9 am to 3:00 pm  
Admission \$8.00  
2026 April 12  
May 3  
June 7

**Model Railroad Train Show**  
Kenosha Union Club  
3030 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue Kenosha, WI  
9:00 am To 1:00 pm  
Admission \$5.00  
2026 No future dates available

Women and Children 12 & Under FREE  
More Information? Call 262-331-0392

**2026 SPREE MOVING FORWARD**

Members of the Pittsburgh S Gaugers model train club are finalizing plans for the 2026 Spring S Spree, scheduled for Friday and Saturday, May 29–30, 2026. The [www.SSpree.info](http://www.SSpree.info) website has recently been updated, and a registration form is now available for download.

**BSG Inventory**

Contact Ron Schlicht Phone (414) 477-7866 Email: [rons48tblue@gmail.com](mailto:rons48tblue@gmail.com)

**Only 4 grays left.**

2021 Fall S Fest Hoppers (Hi-Rail Only) \$50.00  
Each Furnished with Coal Loads



**Special Offer: Pair for \$90.00**

**Next BSG Meeting**

**Date: Sunday April 26th**

**Time: 1:30 pm**

**Club Location:**

**Corner of South St. & Grand Ave.  
Waukesha, WI 53186**

***Future Open House Events***

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup> October 3<sup>rd</sup>**

***Badgerland S Gaugers Club Officers***

**President**  
Ron Schlicht  
5274 S. 49<sup>th</sup>  
Greenfield, WI 53220  
[rons48tblue@gmail.com](mailto:rons48tblue@gmail.com)

**Vice-President**  
Don Goeke  
1517 S. 16<sup>th</sup> St  
Manitowoc, WI 54220  
ditrains@isol.net

**Treasurer**  
Roy Meissner  
P.O. Box 1  
Merton, WI 53056-0001  
262-538-4325  
[rmeissner@wi.rr.com](mailto:rmeissner@wi.rr.com)  
[nasgdispatch@gmail.com](mailto:nasgdispatch@gmail.com)

**Secretary**  
Jeff Madden  
Bron Derw Ct.  
Wales, WI 53183  
262-968-3729

**Directors**  
Tom Patterson  
Wayne Friedrich  
Ray Puls

**Newsletter Editors**  
Ron Schlicht  
Jeff Madden

**Badgerland Website:**  
Doug Stoll: [Omaha@frontier.com](mailto:Omaha@frontier.com)  
[www.trainweb.org/bsg](http://www.trainweb.org/bsg)

BSG encourages its members to share any new or existing product information they may find to be beneficial. Share your scenery, technical or operational experiences on your own home layouts for the BSG newsletters. Photos are encouraged.

Send any comments or suggestions to:  
Ron Schlicht - [rons48tblue@gmail.com](mailto:rons48tblue@gmail.com)



