



Western Division

Train Collectors Association

Newsletter



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March/April 2006

Upcoming Meet Notices

The next WD meet will take place on **Saturday, March 25th**, in the Arcadia Senior Center, located at 405 S. Santa Anita Avenue in Arcadia, CA. Admission is free and sellers: *Tables are free!*

The April WD meet will take place on **Saturday, April 29th**.

To get to the meets, exit the 210 Freeway at Santa Anita Ave. Drive south about half a mile and turn right into the Arcadia Park parking lot. The Senior Center is located next to the lawn bowling area. Look for the WD sign. Hall doors will open at 10:00 AM for table setup, trading and selling. Please check the TCA Western Division website, at <http://www.tcawestern.org>, for additional information and a map!

The March display theme will be **Green for St. Patrick's Day and the earth**. Show off that prized toy train or train related item and facilitate the transfer of knowledge on collecting toy trains. There will be a separate prize drawing for all those who display items! The theme for the April meet will be **April fool's Day, Best Buy and Worst Buy/Buyer's goofs**.

The line up for 2006's WD meet dates is: Mar 25, Apr 29, May 20, Jul 22, Aug 26, Sep 23, Oct 28, & Dec 16. There will be no meet in June due to the National Convention or in November due to Cal-Stewart meet conflicts.

President's Message

By Wayne Sheriff, President, TCA Western Division

The January and February 2006 meets have been great examples of how WD continues to have success in carrying out its mission to preserve an important segment of history - tinplate toy trains - through research, establishment of collecting standards, education, community outreach, fellowship, and to promote the growth and enjoyment of the hobby.

Turnout at both meetings was excellent, there were interesting display items presented, the trading tables offered a variety of vendor products in all gauges, and there were 2 lively auctions.

Western Division is planning to have a booth at the Fullerton Railroad Days event May 6 & 7, 2006. This will be an excellent opportunity to inform, and be visible to, the public regarding WD activities. Last year 35,000 people attended this two day event. The WD BOD is planning the details and will be asking for help from the membership in manning the booth. Just spending two hours at the booth will surely help the division and will also allow the time to see all the other displays. For more information on the Fullerton event, visit <http://www.scrmf.org/rrdays/> on the Internet. If you would like to volunteer to spend some time in the WD booth handing out literature and talking to fellow train enthusiasts, please contact Jon Lang, WD VP, at (562) 430-8315.

The Board of Directors has decided to move the annual 'Kids' meet, normally held in May, to August or September this year. The Boy Scouts who can earn a merit badge for 'hobbies and collecting' will be invited. Thank you to David Otth and Jon Lang, who will be developing the agenda for this event.



A 'big thank' you to Western Division member Tim Simendinger, who has donated a custom Lionel scale model hot air balloon to the club. The balloon (pictured here) has an estimated value of over \$500. The WD Board of Directors decided to offer the membership an opportunity to own this rare item via a special raffle. There will be 100 tickets sold at \$5 each starting at the next meet, with all the proceeds going to boost Western Division's treasury. The drawing for the winner will be held as soon as all tickets are sold.

Raffle tickets for the new Lionel GG-1 engine and monthly \$100 drawing are still available. Over half of the tickets have already been sold in just the first two months of this year. Be sure to get yours at the next meet!

At the February WD meet, Jon Lang provided an update on the Lionel/K-Line situation. In a letter from Jerry Calabrese, President of Lionel, the following statement was made, "Lionel has taken control of the K-Line brand, its tooling, its inventory of unsold products, and everything else that lawyers and accountants call, 'assets'. When everything is in order, Lionel will make new products under the K-Line brand and market and sell those products as part of the Lionel line". Jerry also stated, "for those who have paid for but not received K-Line club products, Lionel is going to make good on those orders". He also said, "that is the right thing to do, even at Lionel's expense".

In an effort to reduce costs to WD and to maximize the benefits of your \$15 annual dues (and to keep the dues amount from going up!) this Newsletter will now be published only every other month.

Now is the time to make arrangements to attend the TCA 52nd National Convention in San Antonio, Texas June 18-25. WD member Jim Kenney has made arrangements to travel there in restored Pullman cars, pulled behind an Amtrak train. There is still room on those cars, so get in touch with Jim at (714) 441-1928 to reserve your spot.

- Wayne Sheriff

January/February Meet Recaps

Submitted by Robert Lemberger, Secretary, TCA Western Division

Everyone appeared to be over the holidays and ready for the New Year. Wayne opened the **January** business meeting with a request for help putting the tables and chairs in their proper position after the meeting. It only takes a few minutes if members pitch in.

Wayne also reminded everyone of Jim Kenney's efforts in organizing a private railcar excursion to the upcoming convention.

Western Division welcomed a new member, Ken Chan. Also, two guests dropped in: Stephen Smith and Charles Darling.

The theme for January was a 'favorite item'. Dave Gaby was first up. He explained that his uncle worked for American Flyer. Dave showed his uncle's Flyer set that he had first played with when he was only ten. Harry Chortanian showed his SP daylight #4449 in 'HO' gauge. Calvin Smith displayed a Lionel #8. Bill Grove talked about the set he couldn't display, as he gave it to his son. Bob Caplan rang a bell, which he explained was from the Seattle National Convention held in 1995. He also showed a Lionel orange #6464 Western Pacific car that is a one-of-a-kind.



Bob Spellmire displayed Lionel flagmen made from 1938 to 1942 and described how the flagmen came in four colors: black, dark blue, light blue and brown. Les Cochran had a brand new Lionel 040 switcher, a recent Christmas present from his daughter. Now there's a collector who knows how to raise children! Jim Kenney displayed an interesting American Flyer 'O' gauge crane car from 1938 or 39. It's patterned after an actual B & O car.

John Abbe showed three Budd cars. One was a Canadian Pacific and the other two were B & O. Harry Harris brought an unusual Heisler logging car. Bob Trimble had several Hallmark ornaments that were purchased for him by his daughter (another well raised child!). He also showed a recently acquired Hudson engine and explained how a friend who was retiring called him out of the blue and offered it for sale to him. Bob wouldn't say what he paid for it.

Harry Harris won the prize for the display and chose a Lionel Pennsylvania Caboose. Ray Nelson, Bob Lemberger, and Tom Hubbard all won in the raffle, selecting a Lionel Pittsburgh car, Englehard tank car, and Delaware and Hudson car respectively. Other winners were Bill Clausen and Rudy Felix, both receiving catalogues and Jon Lang who won a calendar. Ray Sugg won the \$100 bill. Vince Garguilo presided over the auction.



The **February** meet was highlighted with buying, selling, good conversation, Richard Keppel's floor layout, coffee, donuts and sandwiches. What more could a collector want on a Saturday?

Wayne began the business meeting by announcing that annual membership dues in TCA National will be raised \$7 to \$32. The deciding vote count was 2,743 in favor and 1,547 against (out of 30,000 TCA members eligible to vote). TCA has a new division; The Rio Grand division will cover the state of New Mexico.

Mike Donovan, who took over for Steve Waller as monthly meet theme coordinator, began by announcing that today's theme was 'Valentine's Day'. First up was Dave Gaby who brought in a Greenberg's price guide to point out that he had found the word 'love' in it a total of 51 times. Very interesting observation Dave!



Mario Liberatore had a plastic ride train for a toddler. We thought it was a favorite of his and were shocked to see him let it go at the auction. Jim Kenney brought in a Mickey Mouse Circus set from the 1930's. Bob Trimble displayed a red Texas Special car in 'O' gauge by Kusan, and a dual trolley set. John Abbe showed an MKT red stock car and seven red flat cars in 'O' gauge.

Bob Trimble won the display theme drawing and selected a Lionel over-stamped Lehigh Valley boxcar. Raffle drawing winners included Bob Spellmire who selected a Lionel New Haven over-stamped boxcar, John Abbe who picked a Lionel Reading over-stamped boxcar and Christopher Keppel who got the Conrail over New Jersey Central boxcar. Wayne Sheriff won the \$100 bill.

Bill Shepard and Howard Bishop donated a huge lot of postwar Lionel empty boxes to the club for the auction. Thanks guys! The auction was chaired by Harold Shapiro.

Original or Repaint

By Robert Caplan, TCA Standards Committee

One of the TCA Standards Committee's current projects is to find a way to determine whether a tinplate (Pre or Post War) engine or rolling stock item has the original paint applied on it, or if it has been restored or repainted. Charlie Weber, a member of the Standards Steering Committee, has been refining ways to detect a "Repaint vs. Original". Using a molecular micro spectroscopy technique is one high-tech way to do this. The graphic results of this process show an obvious difference (see chart below). An authentic item shows up with a much cleaner pattern than a fake, using the molecular micro spectroscope. The Standards Committee is presently gathering more examples from all areas for comparison, to validate that this technology is sufficient. The committee hopes to be able to provide this service to all TCA members. The process does not take paint chips from the item tested so there is no destruction. The cost to members to have a toy train authenticated will be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$75.

