

# RUN 8

May 2009



## President's Message

*by Bob Roth*

We took a week off during Spring Break to visit my father-in-law in the Atlanta, Georgia vicinity and to hunt for an apartment for our younger son in Fort Worth. My father-in-law is in his mid-eighties and is not in very good health so my wife takes advantage of each holiday opportunity to visit him. This visit was particularly interesting because he had been invited to participate in a "living history" project for veterans living in Henry County, Georgia. Henry County is putting together a history museum on the grounds of the Nash Farm near Jonesboro, Georgia that is to recognize a Civil War battle fought on the grounds following the fall of Atlanta and to honor all veterans of all wars. My father-in-law is a veteran of WWII, Korea and Vietnam and it is interesting to hear him talk about some of his experiences. Like many war veterans, he has never spoken much about his war experiences and he did not say very much during his interview. By the way, his experience in the Marine Corps started with the battle for Okinawa.

He talked with us about his experience getting hired and some of the work he performed during a short time with the Illinois Central Railroad before he joined the Marine Corps in 1944. My father-in-law was raised on a small family farm near Centralia, Illinois and after he turned 21, he took a job at a lumber yard in town. He told us how he heard the IC was hiring and he took time-off from his job at the lumber yard to go down to the railroad station where he joined a large crowd of people looking for a job. He related that after waiting a while, the man that was supposed to be doing the hiring told the crowd they had no jobs available that day and the crowd left disappointed. He went down to the railroad station a second and third time again after hearing the railroad would be hiring and had the same experience, but that third time he stayed and asked the man why the railroad made so much noise they were hiring and then told everyone there were no jobs. Because he stayed and questioned the man, he was hired to work for the railroad.

My thoughts about my father-in-law emphasize the need to keep our eyes open for people around us and within our community who have their own stories. The older railroaders, particularly ones that operated steam locomotives on the main lines, are disappearing as fast as World War II veterans and we need to capture their experiences on tape or on paper, and by scanning any photographs of interest they might have. Specific topics of interest for us include experiences with cattle shipment, passenger operations in and around the Panhandle, mail-handling and many

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more topics. I have been particularly curious about mail-handling since the San Francisco Chief exchanged Railway Post Office cars here in Amarillo until the shipment of mail by train was discontinued in September, 1967. Looking ahead long-range at the operation of our layout, if we want to model the railroad as it operated, we need to know how these departments actually functioned.

The Executive Board met on Saturday, April 11 and covered a number of topics. Plans are going forward to have Steve Goen come to Amarillo on Saturday, June 13 to give a presentation on Passenger Trains in the Texas Panhandle. The presentation will be given at the Texas A&M Center on West Amarillo Blvd. at 7:00 PM. As these arrangements come together we need to advertise this event to the general public as well as to fellow railfans and model railroaders. We will charge \$5.00 admission to defray the costs. For anyone that does not know Steve Goen, he is a member of the National Railway Historical Society, a railroad historian and is author of eight books on railroads to date including such titles as *Down South on the Rock Island; Fort Worth & Denver Railway* and *Santa Fe in the Lone Star State*, books with particularly local ties. Steve came to our last Tri-State Train Show in 2003 as a vendor selling some of the books he had authored up to that time as well as sets of slides. Steve has recently resumed the production of videos starting with a DVD titled *844 and the Sooner Rocket* covering the operation of the UP's 4-8-4 steam engine #844 in Oklahoma during that state's centennial celebration in 2007. This should be an interesting program.

Other items discussed by the Board included the upcoming elections; setting aside Saturday, May 30 for operation of model trains (no work that day) provided the tracks can be repaired by then; exploration of an MKT mechanical refrigerator car as a future custom model; status of some of the building projects including the fire extinguisher inspection and tagging; lighting for the layout; a museum tour requested by a group from Bushland in June; and investigation of movement of our Rock Island boxcar from Progress Rail Services to the ARM. The Board also discussed and augmented the schedule of clinics to be conducted following our monthly Business Meetings as follows:

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| May       | The Rio Grande Southern by Virgil Doyle   |
| June      | Mold Making and Casting by Tracy Ball     |
| July      | Standards for Rolling Stock by Jim Shook  |
| August    | Detailing Structures by Virgil Young      |
| September | Spline Roadbed Construction by Tracy Ball |
| October   | DCC Decoder Installation by Earl Carrell  |
| November  | Railroad Timebooks by Jerry Michels       |

### **Elections:**

I screwed-up at the last Business Meeting by not having the upcoming Election for Board of Director's positions listed on my draft Agenda for the meeting. The Election is to be held during the Business Meeting on May 7. Currently we have two Directors positions held by Tracy Ball and Jerry Michels. Per our incorporation documents we are allowed to have as many as three Directors on the Board and given the responsibilities of the Board, a decision has been made to add a third Director to the Board at this time. Tracy Ball and Jerry Michels have both indicated

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they plan to run for the Board again and we have both Guy Pigg and Virgil Young indicating they will run for the Board. While it appears we have four people running for three positions, there is one other development that changes the equation; Earl Carrell has expressed a desire to step down from the Vice President/Secretary position due to his work constraints that have caused him to miss most of the Business and Board Meetings during this past year. Under our Articles of Incorporation, I have the ability and responsibility to appoint one of the Directors to step-up to fill the remainder of Earl's un-expired term and I am working on this. If any of our members would like to run for a term as a Director on the ARM Executive Board for the coming two years please let one of the officers know in advance of the Business Meeting; the requirements are that the individual candidate must be a Regular member in Good Standing.

Next Meeting: The next Business Meeting will be on Thursday, May 7 at 7:30 PM. The clinic to follow the Business Meeting will be a presentation on The Rio Grande Southern Railroad by our own RGS Modeler, Virgil Doyle.



## MEETING MINUTES

**ARM Business Meeting**

April 2, 2009

**Old Business:**

Meeting Minutes from March: Published in Run 8. Approved as published.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Report was approved as read.

Treasurer Virgil Doyle noted he had continued working on the transfer of funds from Herring Bank to Bank of America.

**Car Sales Report/Update:** Noted that advertisements had been observed in magazines.

Rock Island Boxcars arrived last week; we have 6 different numbers. This is the last of the cars we had ordered for 2008.

ART Reefers: A contract has been sent to Intermountain for a second set of ART cars numbered in the 33000 series; these cars have different fans from the last batch of cars.

Prospects: We are looking at models potentially for an MKT mechanical refrigerator car; it would be nice to have a new model arrive in the November/December time frame as our current stock should be depleted by then.

**Layout Construction:**

Director Tracy Ball related the roof structure over the layout is progressing. We need to install a door frame over by the helix. Outside, everything that is green is all weeds; we received a lot of snow out here last Saturday that provided a good watering for the vegetation so we will need to plan to start cutting vegetation soon.

**Building Update:**

President Bob Roth noted we had received a letter from our insurance company last month directing us to get our fire extinguishers re-inspected and re-tagged by a professional firm. We went through all of the fire extinguishers at the ARM and took the two extinguishers that had been serviced most recently to get inspected and purchased two new extinguishers so that we now have four good fire extinguishers at the ARM. We need to get rid of the older fire extinguishers.

U.S. Flag: Tracy Ball stated he will hang it after Jim provides it.

**Other Ideas:** 5<sup>th</sup> Saturdays: Setting aside days, i.e. 5<sup>th</sup> Saturdays, when we come out and just run trains. Plan no work on these days. Advertise for people to bring their trains out to run. An issue was noted that we need to repair the track to do this on May 30; the question is if we can get the repairs done by then.

Clinic by Steve Goen on Passenger Trains in the Texas Panhandle – we are aiming for Saturday, May 16 at 7:00 PM. We are waiting for confirmation on this.

Scheduling Clinics after monthly Business Meetings:

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| April  | DCC (no formal title) by Jerry Michels   |
| May    | The Rio Grande Southern by Virgil Doyle  |
| June   | Mold Making and Casting by Tracy Ball    |
| July   | Standards for Rolling Stock by Jim Shook |
| August | Detailing Structures by Virgil Young     |

**Housekeeping Schedule:** Month of April – Guy Pigg; it was noted Jim Shook had cleaned today.

May – Andy & Beverly Lyle

**New Business:**

**Shirts:** Paula Young is assembling an order for new shirts with the ARM logo embroidered on the front. Any of our members that would like to order a new shirt needs to submit their order to Paula. Payment will be required at the time of the order with checks made out to the ARM. Types of shirts that can be ordered include Men's or Women's denim shirts in long sleeve and/or short sleeve and polo shirts in various colors. Paula had a handout with the shirt information including the costs. President Bob Roth declared the last day to get shirt orders submitted is May 7.

**Visits:** Bushland ISD has a group that would like to come to the ARM on June 3 to get a presentation on operation lifesaver from Jerry Rector and to tour the train. Tracy Ball noted that Jerry Rector recently retired from the BNSF, but still works for Operation Lifesaver. Some help may be needed on that day to host the group.

Bob Roth noted he had been approached by a church group looking to come to the ARM

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sometime later in the year; no date has been proposed for this visit.

**Operations on May 30:** Question was asked if we might have food that day.

Tracy needs to check his schedule to see if he might be available that day to cook.

**Alarm System:** A question was asked about an alarm system for the ARM.

Response to the question is that we can see the need for an alarm system in the future but there is an issue of cost. We need to build our membership and increase our income to afford an alarm system.

**Museum Coalition Meeting:** The quarterly coalition meeting slid from December.

No contact has been received concerning a date for the next meeting of the Museum Coalition.

**Next work dates:** April 11  
April 25  
May 9  
May 23

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, May 7, 2009.

The meeting was turned over to Jerry Michels for presentation of his clinic on the operation of the Digitrax Digital Command Control (DCC) on the ARM layout.

President Bob Roth then received a note reminder concerning the Election for Directors at the Business meeting in May that was not announced during the meeting. (OOPS!)

**Cleaning Schedule for 2009:**

|           |                           |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| January   | Linda Silva & Paula Young |
| February  | Joe & Ella Sweeney        |
| March     | Jim Shook                 |
| April     | Guy Pigg                  |
| May       | Andy & Beverly Lyle       |
| June      | Earl Carrell              |
| July      | Dan Juliano               |
| August    | Linda Silva & Paula Young |
| September | Jim Shook                 |
| October   | Bob Roth                  |
| November  | David Jusiak              |
| December  | Jim Shook                 |

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Earl Carrell, helped by Tracy Ball, Virgil Doyle, Bob Roth and Jerry Michels behind the scene, fastened the first corner of the curved, 1/4-inch-sheetrock backdrop around the top of the Helix.



Tracy Ball holds the sheetrock next to stringers while Earl Carrell sets the screws on the last part of the first section of the curved backdrop over the Helix.

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Bob Roth, Earl Carrell, Tracy Ball, Virgil Doyle and Jerry Michels pause before packing up their tools after installing the curved backdrop behind the Helix.



A week has passed since the installation of the backdrop behind the Helix. Earl Carrell and Virgil Doyle cut out the final piece of sheetrock for the ceiling over the backdrop and the approach to Canyon.

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It is almost done! Tracy Ball, Virgil Doyle, Jerry Michels, Bob Roth and Earl Carrell mark the piece for trimming to final shape.



The big overhead lights are off, the ceiling over the upper level is in and temporary upper-level lights are on. Virgil Doyle and Bob Roth study the effects. Impressive? Yes!

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**Warming up the Fat Lady**  
*By Virgil Young*

This author has several projects in a state of suspended animation. Work continues on a project so long as it is not tedious or frustrating. When work on any project involves either of these bad vibes, it is best to stop work on that project, write down what has been done, and place the description, along with all of the parts in a plastic bag labeled for kit manufacturer, date and the desired end product. All packages of purchased extra parts should be included in the plastic bag.

Several weeks, months or even years pass.

Eventually, need arises for the set-aside project and the contents of the plastic storage bag are studied for possible completion. Before the project was laid aside, several things had been done and others were left undone. Some things were ignored while the more interesting and fast-moving tasks were occupying our attention. We had become familiar with the project, overlooking its faults and our omissions. So what is the most effective way to get started again?

Take the project outside in morning or evening sunlight and photograph it from several angles. Use a camera with the closest-focusing lens you have. If your camera is a film camera, have prints at least 4"x 6" made. If your camera is electronic, download the pictures to your computer and adjust the exposure for best clarity, and print large prints on plain paper. If greater detail is needed, print on glossy paper.

Now enlightenment arrives. How much does the picture resemble the prototype? How many details are missing entirely? How many details are grossly out-of-scale or misplaced? How many colors are too intense or the wrong shade? How many forgotten drips of paint or globs of glue suddenly mar the work?

The picture technique works because it refocuses our attention to the model. Before, we saw the model against a background of the clutter on the workbench or just held the model up for the wife to see it. Under those circumstances, we saw what we wanted to see. The picture of the model isolates what really exists.

The fat lady is more realistic and ready to sing, but she's still a fat lady.

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