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# *The Lion Roars*



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Bimonthly February, April, June, August, October, December

## **LCCA 2001 Convention at Lexington**



# New 2001 Convention Car



This memento of the LCCA 2001 Convention in Lexington, Kentucky, is right for the time and the place. It will contain your memories of the Convention in thoroughbred country and will be a unique addition to your collection of club cars.

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**Orders must be received on or before 3-31-2001. Cars will be shipped to members after the Convention.**

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Do not combine this order with LCCA dues or any other payment to the club. Do not send cash by mail.

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**ON THE COVER:  
The 2001 LCCA Convention  
in Lexington, Kentucky, will be an  
event to remember.**

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P.O. Box 479  
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They will take care of: applications for membership, replace membership cards, reinstatements, change of address, phone number changes, death notice, commemorative orders, convention registration and club mementos.

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*President Elect* - Schedule a meet.

*Immediate Past President* - Complaint against another member.

*Secretary* - Any administrative action not handled by LCCA Business Office.

*Treasurer* - Club finances only.

*Librarian* - Back issues of *The Lion Roars*.

*Editor, TLR* - "Make good" copy of *The Lion Roars*.

# The President's Report

by Al Otten

HCM 429

## It Was a Really Great Year

The year 2000 is now behind us, and it was the most successful year for your club. Because of your support of our 2000 Convention, the SD-40 Engine and Caboose, the Maxi-stack Convention cars, and the Airport Terminal stocking stuffer, it was not necessary to consider a dues increase. Your continued support of our projects insures no dues increases in the near term.

## Interchange Track

As you know, the Lionel Collectors Club of America has the best publications of all the other clubs, bar none. The *Interchange Track* is very time sensitive as to its distribution by mail. It takes a tremendous amount of tedious work to put it together. It's very time consuming on the part of Editor Bill Button and his staff. Getting the *Interchange Track* to you on a timely basis has not always been possible, and this we regret.

A breakdown by the printer and a more serious breakdown on the part of the mailing service made it necessary for me to replace both firms and recruit other publishing/ mailing vendors. By the time you receive this issue of *The Lion Roars* you will have already received the January 2001 issue of the *Interchange Track* as published by the new printing firm and new mailing service. Barring a catastrophe, we hope to keep on schedule. We are also working on a new plan to improve our on-time delivery to our Canadian and other foreign members. Bear with us for a short period. We should have all the "bugs worked out" shortly.

## The Lion Roars

As I announced in the last issue, Bill Schmeelk will be succeeding Mike Mottler as Editor of *The Lion Roars*. This transition is currently in progress and Bill will fully take over the publication starting with the August, 2001 issue. Mike has set a "high bar" as far as excellence is concerned, and I know that Bill will maintain the mark and probably even exceed it.

## 2001 Convention in Lexington

This issue contains the Lexington, Kentucky, 2001 Convention Supplement. It will be a great Convention with many, many attractions for you and especially your family. Look it over carefully and make your reservations

early. The special 2001 Lexington Convention Car is also featured in this issue. It will be uniquely related to the race horse capital of the world.

## Christmas 2001 Stocking Stuffer

I expect to announce this year's stocking stuffer in the April issue of *The Lion Roars* and in the May issue of the *Interchange Track*. We are planning a very unique car this year.

## Local Train Meets

Local area train meets are one of the backbone activities of any train club. Although LCCA sponsors these events and provides financial backing, our members actually prepare and host the local train meets.



*Media-savvy co-host Len Hopkins assists local TV cable channel videographer in capturing interesting shots for inclusion in a half-hour local special program about the LCCA sponsored train meet in Naperville, IL. Lights, camera, action — cue the trains!*

I encourage you to step up to the plate and volunteer your services. President John F. Kennedy made a very profound statement many years ago. He told the American public, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Just substitute "club" for "country" and see how the statement reads.

To schedule a train meet in your area, please contact President Elect John Fisher at 651-454-6644 or contact him by e-mail: <jtrains@aol.com>. Remember, LCCA pays ALL expenses in hosting a local meet.

Again, thank you for your interest and support of your club.

*aotten3562@aol.com*

# At Trackside

## LCCA Members in Action

### Lexington, Kentucky

The November 25th LCCA-sponsored train meet in Lexington remains a holiday season “prelude” to train hobbyists in the heartland. Event host Harry Overtoom and lots of friends in the area helped to make this annual event a success. Lexington will be the site of the upcoming LCCA Annual Convention in 2001, and many of these local members will be actively engaged in planning and welcoming members to the region of smooth libations, fast horses, and beautiful women.

*Editor's Note: I believe that is the correct order of the adjectives!*



J.W. “Buddy” Richard (RM 266) showed his scratch-built G gauge “Big Boy” locomotive at the train meet. Behind the train, the LCCA panel display introduces newcomers to the programs and publications of the club. Freebie copies of The Lion Roars were available to all.



The Lexington train meet committee included (L to R, standing): Winfrey Adkins (RM 7180), Dave Gladd (RM 10894), Harry Overtoom (RM 1185), and Bill Crace (RM 3066). Seated are (L to R): Jessie Gladd and Brenda Drake.



Frank Morgan (RM 3709) ran his Lionel train layout during the train meet for the enjoyment of onlookers.

*Photographs provided by Harry Overtoom*

### Dearborn, Michigan

Who is that lion at the rostrum? During the banquet at the LCCA-LOTS Joint Annual Convention, a mystery guest appeared, captured the attention of the crowd, and brought a smile to club President, Al Otten. A resourceful photographer got a shot of the celebrity in action. Club mascot, Lenny the Lion, seemed poised and ready to offer a speech to the crowd. The true identify of the guest was not completely cloaked; the suit coat was a giveaway clue to his real persona.



### Naperville, Illinois

Ann Piccininni, a staff writer for the Daily Herald newspaper in Naperville, IL, dropped by to take in the ambiance of the LCCA-sponsored train meet in early December co-hosted by Len Hopkins (RM 16998) and Larry Brongel (RM 20321) and prepared by an active committee. She wrote, “The star of the show was a

railroad layout that took up a 30-by-10-foot space in the auditorium [of Naperville Central High School].” Her report and accompanying photos splashed across page one of the “Neighbor” section of the newspaper on December 6th. Great publicity for a great hobby!



LCCA members supporting the Christmastime train meet were (standing, L to R): C. Prock, D. Mega, C. Chedester, J. Algozzini, L. Rosett, and L. Hopkins. Seated are (L to R): Paul Flood, L. Brongel, F. Piazza, and D. Holt.



The Big Guy in the Red Suit brought in his bag a special “present” for every child attending the train meet — the Lionel train catalog.



Santa welcomed the train meet’s youngest visitor, Gerald Hopkins (4 months old). Santa’s helpers, Allison and Lauren Hopkins, were in charge of distributing goodies to the show-goers — candy canes and Lionel catalogs!



Visitors admire the Santa Fe Chief running on a modular layout at the train meet.



Event co-hosts Len Hopkins and Larry Brongel.



This youngster seems totally engaged with the trains — which is what it’s all about.

*Photographs provided by Len Hopkins*

# The Mane Line

by Dennis Leon Clad

RM 10430

If you're like me, right about now you're itching for this long winter to come to an end so you can start scratching the soil while visioning a blue-ribbon harvest. The flood of gardening catalogs filling my mailbox daily only serves to make that first warm day of planting seem forever in coming. Maybe if I apply the same patience and understanding that I give to my seedlings, these last few weeks filled with old man winter's tirades will soon come to an end and the period of spring rebirth will begin.

Before this becomes a submission to *The Farmers Almanac*, let me introduce to you a Lionel promotional set that's sure to cultivate your ownership desires and, once rooted trackside in your Lionelville, is guaranteed to produce an abundance of "ooohs" and "aaahs" from visitors to your pike.

To my fellow tillers of the soil, the name Pioneer Hi-Bred International needs no explanation. The year 2001 marks the 75th anniversary of this leader in not only the agricultural industry but also the science of hybrid seed corn. The idea to do a Pioneer employee Lionel train set for the company's 75th birthday belongs to Pioneer executive and LCCA treasurer, Eric Fogg.

Let's begin our look at this true Lionel collectible with the set's exquisite GP-7 locomotive. I don't need to remind long-time collectors of this Lionelism: the more time consuming the paint job on any piece of Lionel, the more valuable it becomes down the tracks. This is even truer for Lionel locomotives. Not since the beloved Georgia Power Employee train have promotional set collectors been treated to such a beautiful diesel engine. Its green and black paint job highlighted with white lettering makes this charmer a must-own for Burlington Northern modelers.

If the Lionel boxcar is your favorite piece of rolling stock, get ready for a special treat, another must-have 9700 series freight protector. To the left of the door, this white beauty proudly carries the Pioneer 75th anniversary logo. To the door's right is the Pioneer trademark that was used from 1950 to 1964. What makes this freight mover so desirable is that it is a two-sided boxcar. On the opposite side, to the door's left is the quality Hi-Bred emblem used from 1936 to 1940 and to the door's right is the name "Pioneer" spelled out in an ear-of-corn trademark used from 1945 to 1949. By the way, this is the only piece in the set to carry the company's 75th emblem making it a stand-on-its-own piece in any collection.

As proof that this is a well planned and thought out souvenir set, I offer the next two cars. Soybean oil deliveries can now arrive at your own Lionelville site by means of this whimsical blue-with-white-accent, single dome tanker.

Not since the Georgia Power Employee Set have we promotional series collectors been treated to a four-bay quad hopper. Like the set's engine and first two cars, the hopper is also a superior Lionel toy. Painted in breathtaking black by the artisans at Lionel, I predict that the hopper car will rival the set's boxcar for collector attention.

To ensure a safe arrival at its destination, happily bringing up the rear is a red SP type caboose. Beaming with pride, our little cabin car carries not only a time-honored slogan but also the name of Pioneer's new parent company, the industrial giant, Dupont.

The order deadline for Pioneer Hi-Bred employees to place their request for one of only 1,200 trains made was May, 2000. The #6-21794 "Pioneer Seed Freight" sets was not available to the public nor is it available from Pioneer or Dupont. The best place to begin your search for this collector-pleasing train set is with a want ad in



our sister publication, the *Interchange Track*. As always, I wish you much Lionel luck!

Gold Mine Set,” this train is again headed up with a heavy, hard working six-wheel-drive, die-cast locomotive. The following is the set’s consist: a Lionel mint car carrying a gold bar load, an animated gondola with a gold miner chasing a bandit holding a bag of gold, and a two-bay hopper with a gold ore load.



## Missed Connections

You had to be a night owl and possess a steam trunk full of Lionel luck to obtain ownership of these two train sets. The host of the QVC Train Collectors Junction cable television show, yes, Lionel salesman extraordinaire J. Don Reece, is also the design genius behind both limited train sets offered during the wee hours of this TV show. The first set was offered for sale on October 30, 2000 at 11 p.m. The QVC SKU number is C80851. It also carried a Lionel SKU number (6-21784) and was titled, “The Pennsylvania Coal Train Set.” Only 500 sets were made and will never be produced again. A limited edition certificate of authenticity signed by President Maddox accompanied each set. This unit train is made up of four two-bay hoppers with coal loads and Lionel’s die-cast sprung trucks. Heading up this classy set is a heavy six-wheel-drive, die-cast locomotive. Trailing this outstanding consist is a PRR porthole caboose. The train is decorated in PRR colors. Both sets are ready to run with track and transformer.

The second set was offered on the QVC Train Collectors Junction on November 15, 2000 at 1 a.m. It carried the QVC SKU number C76753 and the Lionel SKU number 6-21785. Titled “The Lionel

Trailing this exciting, action-packed train is a square window caboose. Again only 500 sets were made and each came with a certificate of authenticity signed by President Maddox. Just one look at this train’s colorful gold mine theme is all it takes to push this set to the top of your list. I will have advance information on the next set and show time and date in the April issue. You won’t want to miss the next set. As they say in show biz, stay tuned!

## Lionel Licensee Alert

I just put safely back into its protective home (a Lionel box) one of the most exciting licensed Lionel products that I ever had a chance to review in my six years here at “The Mane Line.” I must say that I’ve grown accustomed to the folks at Taylor Made Trucks hitting a home run each time they straddle home plate at the Licensed Lionel





souvenir series. In fact they hold the record for the most power hits. Each is packed full of both collector and 1950s kid fun. With this third time at bat, they prove to be the Lionel souvenir maker to beat.

The first thing to excite me about “The Year 2000 Anniversary Edition” Lionel rig was the idea of a Lionel flat-bed tractor-trailer carrying a beautifully decorated Lionel caboose. Both the rig and caboose are decked out in the two most beautiful colors on earth, Lionel blue & orange. Take a closer look at the caboose as the photo doesn’t tell the whole story. In the photo, the roof, sides of the trucks, and caboose frame are shown in black when in fact they are all Lionel blue. Both the caboose and the rig have matching gold stamped serial numbers. The caboose can be used on your Lionel pike, but you must change the interior light bulb. For LCCA members, a call to the Taylor Made folks will result in a free bulb sent to you. How this outstanding company can give so much quality and collectability — not to mention lights and sounds — for only \$39.95 I’ll never know. To order call: 800-685-0333 or fax at: 201-816-8833. Shipping is \$6.95 for 1-5 trucks.

### Late Breaking News

A warehouse find in the Windy City has unearthed a treasure trove of edition one Lionel souvenir tractor trailers by Taylor Made Trucks. This rig has been sold out for some time so don’t fail to take advantage of this oh-so-rare second chance. Call 800-685-0333 for availability.



*Brewmaster Gary Bogoff holds a very special Berkshire Brewing Company car made by Lionel.*



*This is one for the “believe it or not” file. The Berkshire Brewing Lionel Reefer sold out faster than the Ben and Jerry TOFC.*

This highly detailed 9800 series Lionel toy is a fitting tribute to the Deerfield, Mass., Brewery founded in 1994 by Mr. Gary Bogoff and Chris Lalli. As our Lionel luck would have it, Mr. Bogoff is a neighbor of Ted’s. So permission to design the car was obtained with all the ease of a pop-top.



*A close-up look at the Berkshire Brewing Company logo.*

Berkshire Brewing creates eight beers on a year-round basis; plus several more for the holiday season. This collector would love to see a Lionel toy decorated for each of the company’s delectable masterpieces. Each of the 315 toys made were from virgin parts shipped from Lionel to authorized off-site Lionel decorator, New England Car Shops. As with all the past NETCA Lionel toys, the car was a complete sell-out and is not available from the NETCA club.

Happy Tracks!

[dennisthemenance@earthlink.net](mailto:dennisthemenance@earthlink.net)

### New England Train Collectors Association

The design team of Al Moore (RM 9493) and Ted Brahm (RM 1063) have again created another Lionel limited edition masterpiece with 6-52212, “The Berkshire Brewing Company” reefer car.

# The Timplate Cannonball

by Ken Morgan

RM 12231

For this 100th anniversary year of our favorite manufacturer of toy trains, I'd like to ask a little trivia question. What was the average wage in the U.S. in 1900? When you get to the answer below, remember what I just said about our subject: toy trains by Lionel — not investment grade collectibles. You're on your own if you want to treat either current or previous production as anything other than toy trains. My philosophy has always been that they have wheels; they're supposed to roll down the tracks. There are no mint-in-the-box collectibles in my collection.

Anyhow, in order not to favor any part of the century, I've focused this installment on the middle of the Lionel Century. Let's look at one of the early die-cast steamers, and what happened to it just before and after WWII.

The 225, with or without an "E" (it always came with the reverse unit; the "E" discriminator was being phased out by Lionel), was part of Lionel's major upgrade to the steam loco line in the middle 1930s. Sure, the 700E/763E gets most of the press, and I have already expressed my opinion that the 226 casting was one of the most important and good-looking ones Lionel ever made, even though the contemporary 225 and 224 castings addressed other parts of the market. If the scale and semi-scale Hudsons pushed the peak of Lionel's potential market and the 226 was the high end of the major market, then the 225 was just one step below. Still near the upper end of the mass market as an O-gauge loco, but a tad less expensive. It's a little smaller than the 226, and the tenders are smaller and cheaper than the big 2226 which accompanied the 226. Like the 226, the casting was only used for O gauge. The 224 — the next step down — had both multiple O-gauge and O27-gauge versions with different numbers and motors. More on those some other time.

Introduced in 1938, Lionel catalogued the 225 for five years through 1942. It came in several variations. The wheel configuration was 2-6-2, making it a Prairie type. It was offered in either gunmetal gray or black. The gray version had either a six-1/8-inch number 2225 timplate waffle top tender (the same as on the 265 Commodore Vanderbilt), or a very nicely detailed die-cast, eight-inch long 2235 tender. This tender is similar to the 2226 in its level of applied trim, but shorter and with four-wheel trucks. This version is fairly hard to find. The 225 in black came with any one of three

different tenders:

- The 2235 described above
- A 2245, which is essentially the same except for the coupler height — which makes it compatible with different rolling stock
- The cheaper plastic version of the 2235, which is a half-inch shorter and doesn't have all the applied detailed trim such as steps and some of the handrails.



In accordance with Lionel's practice at the time, 225s were available either with or without whistle. The whistle generally added about \$1 to the cost, and a "W" suffix to the tender number. **Photo 1** has the 2225, 2245, and plastic 2235 top to bottom.

The 225 had nicely modeled Baldwin disc drivers with steel rims and well-detailed drive rods, plus threaded handrail stanchions, bell, and steam whistle. It is not hard to find in decent condition, and it has a high quality, smooth-running motor. It was usually catalogued with the small 2650 series eight-wheeled freights, but also with the large 2800 series and even the "scale-detailed" 2900 freights, plus a variety of varnish, usually the 2600 series, but including even the 2623 Manhattan cars, so it offers lots of operating flexibility.

Lionel, like just about everybody else, went into a different line of business from 1942 through '45, but they were looking forward to the return to a peacetime economy in 1946 and the introduction of new technology. Among the notable developments were the knuckle coupler and loco smoke, both of which debuted with the 1946 line. But in '46, production was just starting up and reality almost required that existing tooling be reused as much as possible to get products to the marketplace. At the same time, there was a need to upgrade as much as possible to modernize offerings.

In 1946 Lionel catalogued a limited line, but 1947 brought out a much longer roster. The 225, like many other relatively new castings, was modified for that year. Appearing as both the 675 (O gauge) and 2025 (O27), the original casting was altered to make it a bit more realistic and to bear more resemblance to a prototype. Lionel changed the casting to represent a Belpaire firebox, which was typical of the PRR and a few other railroads. But PRR was probably the major

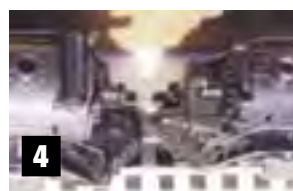


market driver. The Belpaire firebox is characterized by the boxy upper section, which can be clearly seen on the boiler top just forward of the cab in **photo 2**. Essentially the Belpaire design improves the internal bracing, easing the installation of stay bolts. Very much a PRR characteristic, the 675 and 2025 easily added the detail. Remember that what is an addition to the model is the result of a subtraction from the die. That is, to add detail to the model, you remove material from the die. So adding is easy. In modeling the Belpaire firebox, Lionel clearly was looking toward the PRR's famous K4 locos. These engines hauled their crack varnish, such as the Broadway Limited, in direct competition with the NYC's Hudson locomotives on point of the 20th Century Limited. It was a natural. Lionel even placed a prototypical number, 5690, on the boiler front of many of them. And the boiler front itself was recast to more closely resemble the PRR loco. Other changes involved removing the Elesco feedwater heater and repositioning the stack to accommodate the new smoke unit. All of which served to better represent the PRR K4. Unfortunately, the K4 was a Pacific type: a 4-6-2, not a 2-6-2 Prairie. So the 675 and 2025, while reflecting the chunky appearance of the real loco, were even shorter than the small Hudsons were, and, like the Hudsons, short on wheels. **Photos 2 and 3** show most of these casting changes.

Both the 675 and 2025 ran from 1947 through '49. They had the steel-rimmed Baldwin disc drivers and detailed drive rods of the 225. Remember, this is prior to magnetraction. Both locos came with the 2466 tender, which is the post-war version of the pre-war 2235. Interestingly, this tender is based on a NYC prototype, not PRR. When the couplers dropped the coils and went to the magnetic version in 1949, the tender number changed to 6466. For 1950-51, both numbers were dropped with the introduction of magnetraction. The loco was offered only in O27 and catalogued as number 2035. In order to get the benefit of

magnetraction, the Baldwin discs were replaced by generic drivers made of sintered iron. Flat rods replaced the detailed rods. The wheel arrangement changed to 2-6-4, a rather interesting configuration: the right number of wheels for a K4, but backwards, and with no true prototype. Since it is backwards (2-6-4 versus 4-6-2), I have long referred to this loco as a Cificap. It also came with the 6466 tender. The following year, 1952, the 675 and 2025 numbers returned, because magnetraction was deleted as a result of Korean War restrictions on materials. But they used the same sintered iron wheels, flat rods, and 2-6-4 wheel arrangement of the 2035. What did change was the tender, which was replaced by the rounded 2046. At least this was a PRR prototype.

All of these post-war locos run well. They have high quality motors, and their chunky appearance looks good with the plastic O27 passenger cars or O27 freights. But I'll add



one word of caution: there is a lot of motor, smoke system, and E-unit crammed into the rather small casting, making this one of the more complex locos to work on. My advice is to work on some easier ones (2046 family comes to mind) before tackling one of these. In any case, like their pre-war sires, they are commonly available, competitively priced, and fun to run.

And now, the answer to the trivia question. The average wage in the U.S. in 1900 was 22 cents an hour. At 50 weeks of 40 hours each, that's \$440 a year. Lionel's first steam loco, the Standard Gauge #5, which has no tender, went for \$5.50 in 1906. That's 25 hours of pay. The #6, with a tender, was \$7.50, which equates to 34 hours. Makes today's prices look pretty good, doesn't it? By the way, in case you want to know why the railroads were so successful then, there were only 8,000 cars in the U.S. at that time and only 144 miles of paved roads.

See you next time along the mainline of the Tinplate Cannonball.

# The Blischok Collection

## Part 2

by Mike H. Mottler

RM 12394

In the previous edition of *TLR*, we showed the vision, teamwork, and spirit of collaboration invested in creating the magnificent home toy train layout of Thom Blischok. There's more to this story — a lot more.

Thom's layout contains but a fraction of the trains he has collected, so at any one point in time a visitor may see only up to 40 trains in operation on the multi-layer layout in the basement level of the custom-built train house at the Blischok homestead. The upper (ground level) of this building is a display showcase for selected trains and train sets in his collection of standard gauge, O-gauge, and other trains and train-related items. It is a carefully planned room, and it's obvious that he "sweats the details" of this museum-like environment — the cabinetry, the lighting, the décor, the

positioning of it all. This room is also his home office, so he "plays" in it while he works.

One enters the train house across a low bridge that spans a pool stocked with large exotic Japanese Koi. The double doors of the building open upon a central display space dominated by standard gauge trains marching in place along the far wall and a wonderful handcrafted model of a large steam train about 1:18 scale on display. It's a stunning "opening scene" of a movie, and the design of the room draws the visitor into this special world. The

cabinets — and especially the halogen lighting — show the trains to advantage. The dazzling lights enhance and enliven the colors of the locomotives and rolling stock: yellow, peacock, red, terra cotta, green, brass. Even the black on the locomotives glistens brightly.



## The Designer

Stan Gerstenschlager is one of the key associates on the team that brought Thom's dream to reality. He prepared the interior design and attended to the many details of the décor of the place. He is the creator of the color schemes and the total effect; everything comes



together by his authorship. To the extent that Thom's train house is like a movie set, Stan can be considered the Set Designer and Property Master.

Stan described the project as "a big rectangle with lots of challenges." Thom needed a staircase to go down to the trains on the lower level, but Stan wanted to do this without losing a lot of

square footage to a normal staircase. He proposed the idea for display cabinets that seem to float out into the room at an angle, and this created little niches around the upstairs room. He designed deep cabinets to house some of the larger toy train layout structures — stations, terraces, and buildings.

"I convinced Thom to use darker color tones for the walls and other accents," Stan said. "I find that those colors are much more in keeping with the antique-type items and are a good backdrop. My intent was to make the whole thing come together as a unit since he's dealing with a lot of old trains, antique buildings, and accessories. It was a change from the rest of their house, so it became a totally unique area."

Stan applied white to the cabinets because he didn't want them to be dominant in the scene. The artwork on display in the room stands out better on the darker color walls and gives a cozier, warmer feeling. With annual Christmas decorations installed in the room, there's even more color for the season.



The décor for the downstairs room with the train layout presented other challenges. Stan told Thom, "Those white walls are awful, it needs to be clouds or something." So he got some paint, and in a couple of days he had painted the background walls with clouds. It snowballed from there. Stan's main concern was for creating distinct areas for the different types of trains — the circus train, the army train — but he didn't want to lose a lot of space to mountains and scenic effects. Instead, he prepared silhouettes of mountains and had some fun with it. Stan applied different colors for a feeling of depth even though it's not actually there.

The last part of the project was the area underneath the table with the standard gauge trains. He looked at it and decided, "I have 110 feet of snowy mountains to do." It required a lot of foam core material and cutting. The materials had to be easily removed to provide access to some of the other areas.

Stan's projects are distinctive and unique in their own way. He said the Blischok installation was by far the

most challenging because of the amount of things in the collection. Stan has worked with Thom and his wife, Sharla, for years in remodeling their house, building the train room, and decorating it all for seven Christmases.

"The best vantage point of the layout downstairs is when you are still on the spiral staircase because you look down on it and descend into it in a 360-degree circular path. You can see everything by progressive revelation of the scene."



Stan believes the space will continue to evolve. “Every square inch of it is taken up, so doing changes will be a major project. But it will probably happen at times. That’s just the name of the game.”

### The Keeper of the Works

In my initial conversation with Thom, it became clear that he’s a card-carrying member of the “Bob Dennison Fan Club.” Bob has performed the wonderful restoration work on those pieces in the collection that needed the touch of a master’s hand. He has lovingly restored many of the standard gauge pieces on the layout and in display cases. Although there are controversial issues in the train hobby related to restoration, Bob invests considerable skill to the work and maintains fidelity to accuracy of the original. Thom’s strategy in his collection is to create toy trains as they would have looked under the Christmas tree on Christmas morning. To Thom, restoration is recognizing the memories of the past by imagining the delight created with each and every train as it was opened on December 25th.

“I like to see the tattered and torn stuff,” Bob says. He doesn’t use chemicals at all to strip off old paint, he glass-beads everything then primes the piece with an etching primer. He takes out dents wherever he can, but once the metal is stretched, there’s no getting it back into

shape. So he leaves it alone. He doesn’t like to put fillers in, so some dents remain. “These are toys, they’ve been played with; dents are common. You wouldn’t believe the number of BB-gun dents I’ve taken out of the sides of some cars,” he said. He uses acrylic enamels and works with a pro that does a really good job of matching the original colors. To match a car roof color, Bob turns it upside down and matches the paint on the underside. Color matching is both an art and a science, and Bob relies on his master mixer. “I give him plenty of time, because I want it to be right.”

Paint is expensive. A common color is \$35 a quart, and the primer is about \$140 a gallon. Bob buys primer, red, and black by the gallon; the other colors by the quart. The “Dennison-ized” pieces on display in the Blischok collection are the result of a lot of searching for the original Lionel cars and engines for



replacement parts wherever possible; not repro parts.

Bob described the steps of a typical restoration project. “I take it completely apart, strip it with the glass beader, then prime it, spray paint it by hand, and reassemble it. Plated parts are re-plated. Take a 431 diner, for example. It has a body color, the base for the tables and chairs is Mojave, the tables are yellow with a white top (so they have to be painted twice), the chairs are pea

green, and the wall between the kitchen and the rest of the car is maroon. There's a table and a stove in kitchen; the stove is green. The window frames are Hamiltonian red on a green 408 set. Some of them are maroon."

"I always use new spring couplers on Lionel. I glass-bead the wheels and then polish them. Because the nickel on them isn't worth much, I blow it off and re-polish them. I re-wire everything. Engines are completely rebuilt, re-wired, and new bulbs installed. I use an awful lot of replacement parts. Bells are usually too far-gone to mess with. Pantographs, once they turn green, are gone; so I normally replace most of the trim parts," he said.

"For a dining car, a complete repaint will take me a week to ten days to get it all done. I like to leave it set for at least a week after it's painted with the final coat. I always use a hardener in the paint; that's where this glossy look comes from. Over a long period of time, that gloss will go down."

Bob designed and fabricated the two long Hellgate-style bridges on the layout — striking features of the entire train empire. "My son and I got the materials for the base for those bridges. The perforated metal came from Cleveland, Ohio, as a 3x8-foot sheet. The first pair came folded and had to be sent back. The second pair was OK, so my son drilled and we formed the whole thing. He welded it all together, and I painted it with etching primer and enamel paint," he said. "It was a bigger job than we knew up front." The bridges actually support their entire weight and the load upon them. They're attached at both ends, so they are not props; they are real bridges 12 feet long with no sag in them at all.

Thom marvels at the bridgework and the installation. "It's quite unique. We considered how to paint it, how to assemble it, and how to transport it from the shop to here. We actually installed the bases first, then took them off the layout, installed the superstructure, and then reinstalled the bridges. Then of course, we had to put the track in them and make that work. There are signal lights on each end, and it's wired so that they operate with realism. If the train is going in one direction, the light on the far end will turn red," Thom said.

Thom has asked Bob to create some standard gauge variations, because he can't find them. "We've tried to create the rare variations. The long-term strategy of this standard gauge collection is to create every single variation of standard gauge that ever existed. We're working hard at that. Bob keeps busy at it most of the year. If we could find everything brand new, pristine in

the box, we'd look for it and buy it for the collection. But you just can't do it; it's impossible." To Thom, standard gauge trains reveal the history of America as it entered the era of mass production. The artisanship, the engineering, and the manufacturing of mass-produced toy trains were invented during this period of history.

Bob considers Thom an ideal client, and there can be no question about that. Bob has other work in the pipeline for Thom — a Lionel Hiawatha freight set, a 190 passenger set, a Dorfan set, the Ives Black Diamond with the original Lionel body cars, and other projects. He estimates it'll keep him busy for five or six years. Bob grew up collecting American Flyer trains, and he has an extensive collection of 3/16-scale trains plus a fair amount of standard gauge — "wide gauge" as AF called it.

### **Other Collectors in the House**

Collecting is evident in the Blischok household in other products. Thom and Sharla also enjoy collecting antique clocks, and the striking of the hour in their house is an acoustic musical sound show.

Their 14-year-old daughter, Alisha, helped her dad with the train layout and recalled the beginning of her dad's interest in trains. "When I was little, my dad used to go to this one train store and he would buy a lot of stuff. He told me it was for a little boy. One Christmas, he set up a train layout in our living room. It was there on Christmas morning, and it was really neat. I didn't even know he was doing this. I first learned how to run a train then. I was maybe eight. My first toy train was a Lionel Girls set."

As family photographer, she takes pictures of the trains and has learned how to operate the train layout, change the speed, and blow the horns. "I'm into a lot more things now. I can get up on the tracks and reset derailed trains. I helped my dad when he was first building the layout. I carried boxes of trains from the house down here [to the train room]," she said. "I once made cactuses out of modeling foam for my dad for use at a convention in Arizona. They ended up on the train layout."

Like most teenagers, she has her own interests. "I play the trumpet and I collect Austrian crystal, Disney figurines, carousel horses, and birds by Andrea. That's my mom's collection, but it's located in my room. I play softball and collect softball pins. Whenever the team goes to an ASA state or national tournament, we bring our team pins with the team name on them. We trade them with other people. I'm pitcher or second base. I pitch fastballs, change ups, and drop balls."

## Extending the Collection to Include Original Artwork

To most readers of *TLR*, frequenters of regional train shows, and attendees of TCA-sponsored trains meets at York, Pennsylvania, the toy-train-related artwork of Angela Trotta Thomas is not only familiar, but treasured. Her wholesome images of the hobby recall for many the golden age of toy trains.

Her three paintings on the covers of the December, 2000 edition of *The Lion Roars* tie-in to this story in an intriguing way. Thom commissioned those paintings plus a fourth image shown here for the first time. During an installation party in the Blishock home, Angela presented the four paintings as a set to the new owners.



In the background, signage on one of the shops identifies “Alisha’s Dress Shop,” named for Thom’s teenage daughter. The little girl in the picture is a stylized image of his daughter, Alisha, when she was seven years old. She always liked to wear a bow in her hair.

**Picture two** shows the Hellgate Bridge at another point in time with O-gauge trains of the Classic (prewar) Era. Note the inclusion of “Thom’s Pharmacy” in the background, a classic auto of that



On closer study, the linkage of the paintings to the Blishock family becomes obvious. **Picture one** includes standard gauge trains and the Hellgate Bridge in the Standard Gauge Era — a major aspect of Thom’s layout.

period, and the Lionel icons of that time running on the layout — the Blue Comet (which was Sharla’s first train set gifted to Thom) and the Hiawatha streamliner of that period.

**Picture three** is the Postwar Era with an exuberant ’59 Cadillac in the background parked at street number 4244 — a sly reference to Thom’s house number. The



now-slightly-older children are Sharla and Thom (taken from actual childhood photos) admiring the trains of the 1940s and 50s — the Santa Fe F-3 Super Chief and the Pennsy GG-1. The GG-1 pays tribute to Thom’s birthplace, Pennsylvania, and the Santa Fe

reflects his love of the West where the family lives today.

**Picture four** represents Lionel in these modern times as it rushes into its second hundred years of making toy trains and memories. “Sharla’s Bistro” is at the center of the picture, named after Sharla, who you remember from the first article was the catalyst in Thom’s toy train collecting journey. Engine 4006, a Union Pacific Big Boy, is racing across the picture passing over a new Lionel toy train hobby shop. In the lower right hand corner is a year 2000 anniversary catalog representing the last century of Lionel with its cover designed by Angela Trotta Thomas. By the way, the original artwork of this catalog cover is next to Thom’s desk in the train room.

Both Thom and Sharla enjoy Angela’s work tremendously. Sharla believes that Angela has the gift of creating memories that will last a lifetime. Thom agrees. “Without question, we will see more of Angela’s artwork in the train room as the years progress,” Thom noted.

## The View from behind the Lens

My colleague in preparing this two-part story was photographer Nathan Nitske, a shutter pro but not a train hobbyist. He saw the Blishock layout and collection through “fresh eyes,” and it was a new revelation. “My first instinct when I saw this layout is that it’s like the



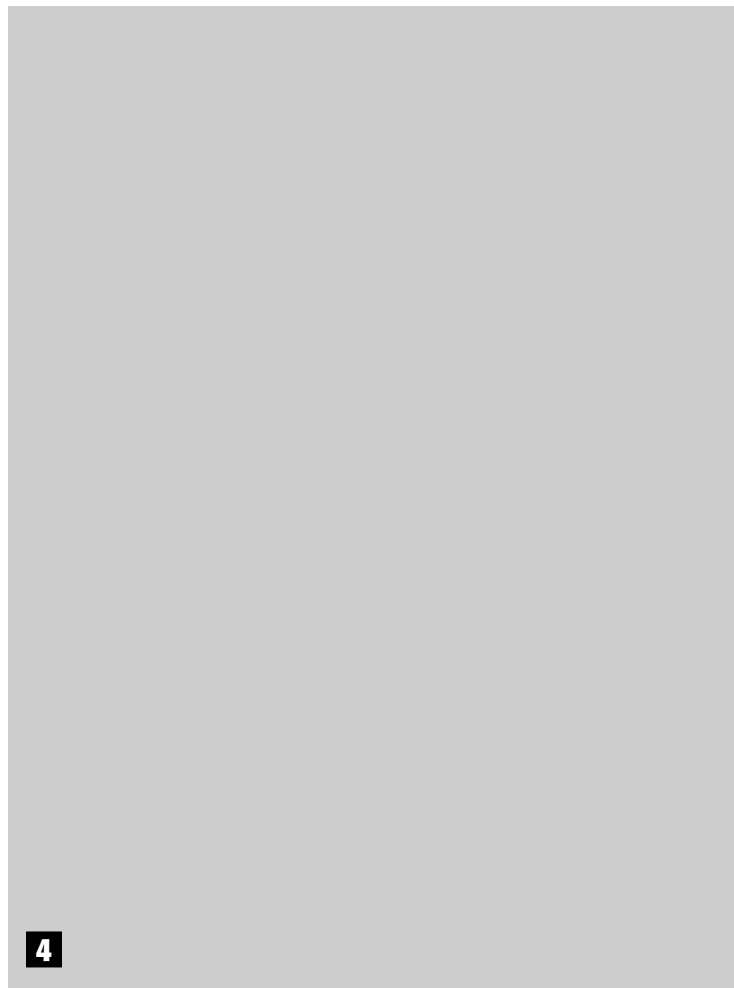
Grand Canyon. You can't take one picture of it. It's so immense that a single picture just won't tell the story," he said. "For Thom, it's a passion, not just a hobby. It was certainly a challenge to capture the essence of what's contained in such a massive collection."

I asked Nathan to share some professional tips with amateur photographers who want to take high quality photographs of their layout with a 35mm camera. "Getting a decent photograph really requires the lighting to be right. Be wary of photographing under fluorescent lights. Film colors just don't work out well with fluorescents. When you're working with quite a large area, the flash on the camera will not cover the scene, and 'flash shadows' become a problem. The best thing to do is to have a tripod and use longer exposure times. Turn the flash off and effectively use whatever ambient lighting you can capture. Use floor lamps and bounce their light off the ceiling to give more even lighting and avoid deep shadows. Every big city has a camera rental store, and you can rent lighting gear there and find videos on how to do it."

## Postscript

Visiting the Blischok layout and collection was for me a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see a truly impressive array of operating trains and a showcase of collector's items. My home modular layout and modest collection of Rock Island pieces made by Lionel and other manufacturers pales by comparison in number and value to what Thom has gathered for enjoyment.

But Thom's experience with the hobby transcends the inventory, its book value, and the budget of its glorious setting. I deduced that the story he told to his daughter,



4

*The fourth painting in the series*

Alisha, in the train store — about buying the trains for a "little boy" — was not a white lie. He is that little boy, and there is a little boy inside most of us that remains full of wonder at the sight of toy trains. The magic is as powerful in one that has one train as in another with many, as wonderful with one oval of track as with a labyrinth. Fortunately, there is no order of magnitude to the miracle of this inspiration.

## A Postscript by Thom

*As we've had the opportunity to work with LCCA in this series of articles we have found new friends. Mike Mottler brought these*

*two articles to life. On behalf of Sharla, Alisha, and myself, we can only say thanks to Mike for his outstanding literary skills and friendship. It was truly enjoyable to work with such a talented individual. To John Fisher, thanks for convincing us to do this series of articles. You are truly a great friend and in many ways the passion that started this journey began as we sat in your house in St. Paul many years ago and talked about toy trains.*

*Our layout and collection represent what we believe is the "heart and soul" of the train hobby. And that is the creation of lasting fellowship and friendship. We can't thank our team members enough for their contributions. Without them this would have never been possible. These two articles have taken all of you through our dream of creating a small world of toy trains. And, for us, Sharla, Alisha, and myself, the thousands of memories created during this journey will live in our hearts forever.*

*Trains are and will continue to be fun.*

*Artwork by Angela Trotta Thomas*

*Photographs by Nathan Nitske*

# The Race Is on to Lexington



## Mark Your Calendar Now

Make plans to meet with your toy-train friends from around the world in Lexington, Kentucky, this summer. The Co-hosts of the 2001 Convention Committee invite you and your entire family to the Lionel® Collectors Club of America (LCCA) annual convention.

This will be a return visit to Lexington where one of the club's best conventions was held in 1988. But this one is planned to be even bigger and better! We have secured the same outstanding facility, and it will enable club members to treat their spouse and family to a luxurious stay at a very affordable price. Use the Hotel Reservation Request Form in this section to get the special, low room rate of \$97 for the Convention.

## Tours and Attractions

- Scenic Bluegrass Tour — includes horse farm tour, toy museum, and bourbon distillery
- My Old Kentucky Dinner Train excursion
- Private horse farm tours and Keeneland Racecourse
- Lunch at the Glitz, antique gallery, and tour of Henry Clay Home
- Get Acquainted Party with all the Kentucky barbecue you can eat
- Huge public display area with multiple layouts and displays

The Lexington Convention and Visitors Bureau has information about the area. Call toll-free 800-848-1224, or visit their website at: <[www.visitlex.com](http://www.visitlex.com)> Register early and join us July 25-29, 2001, in Lexington.

Form may be  
photocopied

## Lionel® Collectors Club of America 30th ANNUAL CONVENTION - REGISTRATION FORM

**Pre-Registration Fee of \$39 must be received on or before June 1, 2001.  
If received after June 1st or at the door, the Registration Fee will be \$54.  
No refunds after July 15, 2001 — Please print or type.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ LCCA#: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle Initial) (Last)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a dealer?  Yes  No

Spouse's name (if attending\*): \_\_\_\_\_

(\*If spouse is a Regular Member and wants the complete Convention Commemorative package, a separate, full registration fee must be paid.)

Children's names and ages (if attending): \_\_\_\_\_

If you want your table next to a specific member\*\*, indicate:

Member's name: \_\_\_\_\_ LCCA#: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Please send your form and the other Member's form (with separate checks/money orders) in the same envelope.

**Member Pre-Registration** (includes non-Member spouse and children) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$39 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Tables** — Each with one chair \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Electrical Hook-up** — per registrant \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$30 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Get Acquainted Party** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$14 (Adults) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$20 (Adults) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$8 (Children) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Hyatt Guests) (non-Hyatt Guests)

**Banquet** — Make your entree choice (includes salad, vegetable, coffee/tea/milk & dessert)

Adult: \_\_\_\_\_ 6 oz. Filet @ \$39 -or- \_\_\_\_\_ Honey Bourbon Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$34 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Children: A menu specially designed for our younger guests \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$19 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Tours Selections** — Enter the sub-total cost of the tour(s) selected on the work sheet here: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

List the tours by number and seats (e.g., Tour #1, 2 seats, etc.) below:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GRAND TOTAL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check/money order (in U.S. funds) payable to: **2001 LCCA Convention.**  
To charge it to your credit card, fill out the information below.

CARD # \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] VISA [ ] MASTERCARD [ ] DISCOVER

EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form or a photocopy with  
check/money order or credit card info to:  
2001 LCCA Convention  
P.O. Box 479  
LaSalle, IL 61301-0479

**DO NOT send hotel reservations to the LCCA.**  
Use the separate form to make your reservations at the  
Hyatt Regency Lexington and mail your request directly  
to their address listed on the form.  
Arrival Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## REGISTRATION, HOTEL RESERVATIONS, TRADING HALL, BANQUET, and OTHER INFORMATION

### Convention Registration

The special early registration fee is only \$39 if received on or before June 1, 2001. Registrations received after this date or at the door will be \$54. All pre-registrants will receive confirmation by mail.

Each registrant will receive a registration packet and a special Convention souvenir. Pre-registered members may pick up their packet at the registration desk by showing their current membership card. Those who register but do not attend will receive their souvenir by mail after the Convention. Under club convention rules, guests are not allowed — only your immediate family (spouse and children under the age of 21) are admitted with your registration. Tickets will be provided with your registration packet and are required for all tours and other events. Register early to get the tours, events, and tables you want.

*NOTE: All Convention activities and events (with the exception of the public display and trading during the general public admission time frame) are open only to properly registered, badge-wearing attendees, their spouses, and minor children. Extended family members are not included in this definition.*

### Accommodations

The Hyatt Regency Lexington is the Convention hotel for this event. This is a first-class hotel with a large number of rooms set aside for the Convention. It is in the same complex, and the banquet and trading halls are within easy walking distance inside air-conditioned comfort. Use the separate Hotel Registration Form to submit your hotel reservation request. Mention the LCCA when requesting reservations by phone or fax.

### Parking

Valet parking and self-parking are available at the hotel. Self-parking is adjacent to the convention center for ALL conventioners by picking up a free parking pass with your convention registration package.

### Trading Hall and Tables

30,000 sq. ft of Trading Hall space has been set aside that will accommodate 400 tables. Tables are available at \$25 each with no limit on number. If you want your table next to another member, please so indicate on the Registration Form and send both forms, with separate checks, in the same envelope. Tables with an electrical outlet are available for an additional fee of \$30. No flashing lights, sirens, blowing horns, etc.

Unloading and set-up will be on Friday, July 27th from 10 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. and on Saturday, July 28th from 7:30 a.m. until 8:45 a.m. Trading is not permitted during set-up times. Violators will be told to leave and disallowed from selling at the Convention. Security will be provided. If all tables are sold, your name will be placed on a waiting list. All train and related items must be clearly marked and priced.

This year we will organize the Trading Hall in a very different way with trading starting on Friday night at 5 p.m. for **registered convention attendees only**. This registered-only trading will continue until 9 p.m. and resume on Saturday from 9 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. At 1:30 p.m., we will open the Trading Hall to the general public until closing at 5 p.m. NO teardown will be allowed prior to 5 p.m. The Trading Hall will close at 5 p.m. until 6:45 p.m. for teardown and again on Sunday from 8 until 10 a.m. There will be **NO trading on Sunday** as has been done in the past.

### Shipping

On-site shipping service will be available for attendees who want to ship their trains. This service will be available outside the Trading Hall on Saturday only.

### Transportation

Lexington is served by American, Comair, Continental, Delta, Northwest, United, and USAir airlines. The airport is approximately 15 minutes from the convention center site and the host hotel offers courtesy pickup service. In addition, Louisville and Cincinnati airports are within reasonable commuting distance. Limo service from Cincinnati is available to Lexington.

### Cocktail Reception and Banquet

Our cocktail reception will be Saturday July 28, from 6 to 7 p.m. The banquet will start at 7 p.m. and will run to about 10 p.m. Unlike the Dearborn Convention there will be no separate dining area for the children. We will all be in the same banquet room. Tables may be selected and reserved by signing up at the registration desk in advance starting on Wednesday, July 25, 2001. These will be maintained in our computer and each table of ten will require names and registration numbers to reserve a table seat. Members will sit in their pre-reserved seats only. This computer sign-up list will be available at the banquet to resolve any questions on the spot. Anyone not seated

in their correct seat will be told to vacate it. Those wishing to reserve an entire table must fill-in all names and convention registration numbers at least 24 hours in advance of the banquet.

Adults will choose from either a 6 oz. filet or honey bourbon chicken accompanied by salad, vegetables, dessert, and drink. The child's plate will be chicken fingers, fries, a selection of vegetables, cookie, and drink.

As always, the banquet is one of our more popular events with plenty of prizes and give-aways. This one will be no exception! There will also be a silent auction during the evening, and auction items may be redeemed immediately after the banquet. In addition, raffle tickets will be sold throughout the Convention and winning tickets will be drawn and posted immediately after the banquet.

### Get Acquainted Party

At 5 p.m. on Thursday evening, July 26th, we will board buses for a short trip to the new Lexington Legends Minor League Baseball stadium. The Lexington Legends are affiliated with the Houston Astros. This is a state-of-the-art stadium that can be toured during the evening from 5 to 7 p.m. The party will run from 6 to 9 p.m. with bus service to and from the Hyatt from 5 to 9:30 p.m.

The menu for the evening consists of all-you-can-eat BBQ pulled pork, BBQ ribs, and BBQ chicken plus baked beans, potato salad, garden salad, and assorted desserts plus Pepsi Cola products to drink. An open cash bar will

also be available. For adults staying at the Hyatt, the costs will be \$14; adults not staying at the Hyatt, \$20; and children (under the age of 12), \$8. The Get Acquainted Party requires a proper convention badge for admittance and NO food or beverages will be permitted to be taken from this event. No food coolers or food containers will be allowed. For you and your children, there will be a batting cage, base running, speed pitching, a carousel, and a play-ground to use.

Special entertainment will be presented for your enjoyment during the evening.

### LCCA Annual Membership Meeting

This event will be held on Friday, July 27th, at 2 p.m.

### Lionel Seminar

This presentation by Lionel executives will be a highlight of the Convention. The seminar will be held from 3 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. on Friday, July 27th. Get the inside info from Lionel!

### Public Displays

This promises to be one of the largest public display areas we have ever had at a Convention with multiple layouts on display. There will also be a scale steam engine for kids to ride. In 1988 we saw over 10,000 public visitors come through the display area. We expect even more this time! The public display area will be open on Saturday only, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

*Relive the golden days of railroad dining aboard the Old Kentucky Dinner Train*



Form may be photocopied

## CONVENTION TOURS WORKSHEET

**Limited seating – first come, first served. YOU SNOOZE, YOU LOSE!**  
**IMPORTANT NOTE: ALL TOUR TIMES ARE EASTERN DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Member #: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle Initial) (Last)

Instructions: Circle the tour(s) of your choice. Allow at least one hour between tours on the same day. Fill in the number of seats and dollar amounts across from each tour you want to attend. Also, please list the tour number and quantity of seats on the front of this form. If the tour(s) selected are filled, you will be scheduled in the next closest time slot. Note that all travel to/from tour sites is by motorcoach or van only. No personal vehicles.

### Wednesday, July 25th

**#1 & #2 Scenic Bluegrass Tour** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$31 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 #1 Departs 7:30 a.m. and #2 departs 12:30 p.m.

**#3 My Old Kentucky Dinner Train\*** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$82 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Departs 3:30 p.m.  
 Number of entrée selections desired: \_\_\_ Prime Rib au jus \_\_\_ Fresh Salmon \_\_\_ Boneless Breast of Chicken  
 \* Children under age of 8 not allowed due to safety reasons.

**# 4 & #5 Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$24 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 #4 Departs 7 a.m. and #5 departs 1 p.m.

### Thursday, July 26th

**#6 & #7 Scenic Bluegrass Tour** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$31 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 #6 Departs 7:30 a.m. and #7 departs 12:30 p.m.

**# 8 & #9 Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$24 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 #8 Departs 7 a.m. and #9 departs 1 p.m.

### Friday, July 27th

**#10 Scenic Bluegrass Tour** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$31 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 #10 Departs 7:30 a.m.

**# 11 Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$24 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 #11 Departs 7 a.m.

### Saturday, July 28th

**# 12 The Glitz and Irish Acres Antique Gallery Tour** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$48 = \_\_\_\_\_  
 #12 Departs 10:45 a.m.

TOURS SUB-TOTAL: = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please enter tour numbers, quantity of seats,  
 and total cost on the Annual Convention Registration Form**

## TOURS BACKGROUND AND INFORMATION

**IMPORTANT NOTE: ALL TOUR TIMES ARE EASTERN DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME**

### Scenic Bluegrass Tour

This grand tour is designed for you to see the Bluegrass! Leaving by motorcoach from the convention hotel, you will be taken directly to the outskirts of Lexington where a real horse farm awaits you and where some of the finest horses in the racing industry are raised.



Enjoy seeing where beautiful horses are pampered and trained. Ride along the bluegrass countryside where the fields are dotted with lavish barns and enclosed with white plank fences. It is just beautiful! While on the motorcoach you will stop for a guided tour of the Labrot & Graham Distillery where Woodford Reserve Bourbon is produced and see their beautiful gift shop and museum. Finally you will visit Nostalgia Station Toy and Train Museum in the old L&N depot at Versailles, Kentucky, where toys and trains await you including a 1950s store display. This tour is guaranteed to give you a taste of the beautiful bluegrass. You will return to the Convention hotel in time for either lunch or dinner depending on the tour taken. Tour takes about 4-1/2 hours round-trip from hotel. All admissions are included. You will also receive a small gift as a souvenir from the tour.

When: Wednesday, July 25th, with two departures; Thursday, July 26th, with two departures; and Friday, July 27th, with one departure.  
Cost per person is \$31.

### My Old Kentucky Dinner Train

One of the great pleasures of the railroads was dining aboard a train as it moved across America's railroad landscape. This tour will allow you to enjoy that experience in the style of the bygone days of railroading. We will motorcoach to Bardstown, Kentucky, where you'll enjoy an opportunity to see the Bluegrass from a



railroad car and experience dining as it was meant to be! You will depart from an 1860s train station that houses a gift shop and restrooms. The restored luxurious interiors of the 1940s dining cars will greet you with white table cloths and fine china. Tuxedoed attendants will escort you to your assigned seats. Your pre-selected choice of entrée will already be in preparation as the train departs the station over the private rails of the R.J. Corman Corporation's trackage. A leisurely evening will begin with appetizers before the main course is served. The service will be outstanding and the food no less! As you ride, you will venture through the Bernheim Forest and see the backside of Kentucky. Along the old L&N trackage you'll ride over the Jackson Hollow trestle. At the end of the evening we will return to the Bardstown station where a small gift shop will await you. It should be noted that this tour would be most appreciated by adults because of the cost. Children under the age of eight cannot be accommodated for safety reasons. Sorry, we are not able to offer children's menu selections. The excursion is limited to 136 seats. This tour lasts about 5-1/2 hours round-trip from the hotel. Dinner selections must be pre-ordered and you may choose from the following: prime rib au jus, fresh salmon, or boneless breast of chicken.

When: Wednesday, July 25th. If sold out we will book you automatically on an additional tour for Tuesday, July 24th.  
Cost: \$82 per person.

### Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour

See the horse capital of the world as it is meant to be seen! Most central Kentucky horse farms are closed to the public except by private tour. Native Kentuckian, Margaret Woods, provides the best of these. She has made special arrangements to access two of the premier farms from such names as Gainesway, Claiborne, Stone, Buckram Oak, Donamire, and Calumet. You will also



travel by air-conditioned modern vans to see the famous Keeneland Racecourse where the best thoroughbreds race leading up to the Kentucky Derby as well as see Thoroughbred Park in downtown Lexington. At Keeneland you'll see the paddock area, the betting windows, and the race track itself. The morning tour will also allow time to get breakfast at the track on your own. (No meal available on the afternoon tour.) The goal of



this tour is to take you inside the plank fences and down shady lanes of central Kentucky where you will see horses just home from the track, previous winners, in-foal broodmares, weanlings, yearlings, and maybe some newborn foals. You will see the daily procedures and inner workings of the farms. Traveling in a small van will allow the group to get the most personal tour possible and see

to these beautiful horses. This tour is not suggested for small children. This tour lasts 3-1/2 to 4 hours. Each tour is limited to 39 seats. If the tour requested is sold out, the next closest tour to the requested time will be assigned automatically.

When: Wednesday, July 25th, with two departures;  
Thursday, July 26th, with two departures; and Friday, July 27th, with one departure.  
Cost: \$24 per person.

### **The Glitz, Irish Acres Antique Gallery, and Henry Clay Home Tour**

This tour will take you to Nonesuch, Kentucky, where an old schoolhouse awaits you. Inside is no schoolhouse, but one of the finest antique galleries you have ever seen. There you will see some 32,000 sq. ft. of American and European furniture, glassware, china, crystal, linens, dolls, jewelry, rugs, decorative accessories, and international giftware. There are 50 themed rooms decorated to the hilt with tiny white lights and crammed with every kind of antique you can imagine. This is unlike any ordinary antique store. In the basement is a most unusual and rewarding luncheon dining experience. The food is excellent, but it is the ambiance that makes it a luncheon to remember. The dinnerware is the finest and the décor is beyond anything you have ever seen. Lunch is included with the tour. Also the tour will stop at the Home of Statesman Henry Clay in Lexington called Ashland before returning to the Hotel.

When: Saturday, July 28th  
10:45 a.m. — 3 p.m.  
Cost: \$48 per person.



# Hyatt<sup>®</sup> Regency Lexington

*Form may be photocopied*

**PLEASE NOTE**

RESERVE ROOM(S) WITH A CREDIT CARD  
OR MAKE CHECK/MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO:  
**HYATT REGENCY LEXINGTON**  
DO NOT SEND CURRENCY.

ORGANIZATION:   LCCA  

FUNCTION:   2001 Convention  

DATES   July 25 to 28, 2001  

ALL REQUEST FOR THE ABOVE GROUP MUST BE RECEIVED BY   July 1, 2001  

<b>Please reserve accommodations for:</b>	<i>Please print or type</i>
NAME _____ COMPANY <u>  LCCA  </u> PRICE <u>  \$97  </u>	
ADDRESS _____	
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____	
SHARING ROOM WITH _____ NO. OF PERSONS _____	
SIGNATURE _____ PHONE NUMBER _____	

MONTH	DAY

ARRIVAL DATE

ARRIVAL TIME

MONTH	DAY

DEPARTURE DATE

CHECK IN TIME: AFTER 3 P.M.

CHECK OUT TIME: NOON

ACCOMMODATIONS WILL NOT BE CONFIRMED WITHOUT A CHECK FOR THE FIRST NIGHT'S DEPOSIT OR YOUR CREDIT CARD#. YOU WILL BE CHARGED FOR THE FIRST NIGHT IF RESERVATIONS ARE NOT CANCELED 72 HOURS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL. TO MAKE RESERVATIONS, FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS CARD TO THE HOTEL OR CALL 800-233-1234.

CREDIT CARD # \_\_\_\_\_  AMEX  DINER'S CLUB  VISA  MASTERCARD  DISCOVER

EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>PLEASE CHECK PREFERRED ACCOMMODATIONS OR CALL 1-800-233-1234 FOR RESERVATIONS.</b></p> <p>PLEASE RESERVE ____ NO. OF:    <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE    <input type="checkbox"/> TRIPLE    LOCAL RATES ARE: \$97 FOR SINGLE, DOUBLE, TRIPLE OR QUAD, <input type="checkbox"/> SMOKING ROOM                    <input type="checkbox"/> DOUBLE    <input type="checkbox"/> QUAD    PLUS APPLICABLE TAXES. <input type="checkbox"/> NON-SMOKING ROOM</p> <p>THE SPECIAL LCCA CONVENTION RATES WILL BE HONORED BOTH 3 DAYS BEFORE JULY 25TH AND 3 DAYS AFTER JULY 28TH FOR THOSE WISHING TO COME EARLY OR STAY LATE. IF RATE OR ROOM TYPE IS NOT AVAILABLE, THE NEAREST AVAILABLE RATE WILL BE ASSIGNED. ROLL-AWAY CHARGE \$15.00; AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST. RATES ARE SUBJECT TO CURRENT TAXES OF 12.4%. NO CHARGE FOR CHILDREN 17 AND UNDER OCCUPYING THE SAME ROOM AS PARENTS.</p>
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Fill out all necessary information and mail directly to:

**HYATT REGENCY LEXINGTON**  
**Attn: Reservations Department, 401 West High Street, Lexington, KY 40507**  
**Phone: 859-253-1234 or 800-233-1234 Fax: 859-254-7430**

## CONTACTS AND DIRECTIONS FOR CONVENTION TRAVELERS

### Hyatt Regency Lexington

Convention Headquarters Hotel

Phone: 859-253-1234 or 800-233-1234

### Lexington Bluegrass Airport (LEX)

### GENERAL DIRECTIONS TO HOTEL FROM NORTH OR SOUTH

Follow I-75 South or North to Lexington — Exit at Paris Pike exit #113. Follow Paris Pike which becomes North Broadway to downtown Lexington for about three miles to High Street. Turn right and the hotel is on your immediate right.

### FROM EAST OR WEST

Follow I-64 East or West to Lexington — Exit at Paris Pike exit #113. Follow Paris Pike which becomes North Broadway to downtown Lexington for about three miles to High Street. Turn right and the hotel is on your immediate right.

### FROM AIRPORT

Exit Airport to your left. At stoplight, turn right onto Versailles Road. Follow Versailles Road for about six miles to downtown Lexington. Turn left on Broadway for one block and then left on High Street. Hotel is on your immediate right.

### PEOPLE TO CONTACT

For general questions and information:

LCCA Co-Host: LCCA Co-Host:

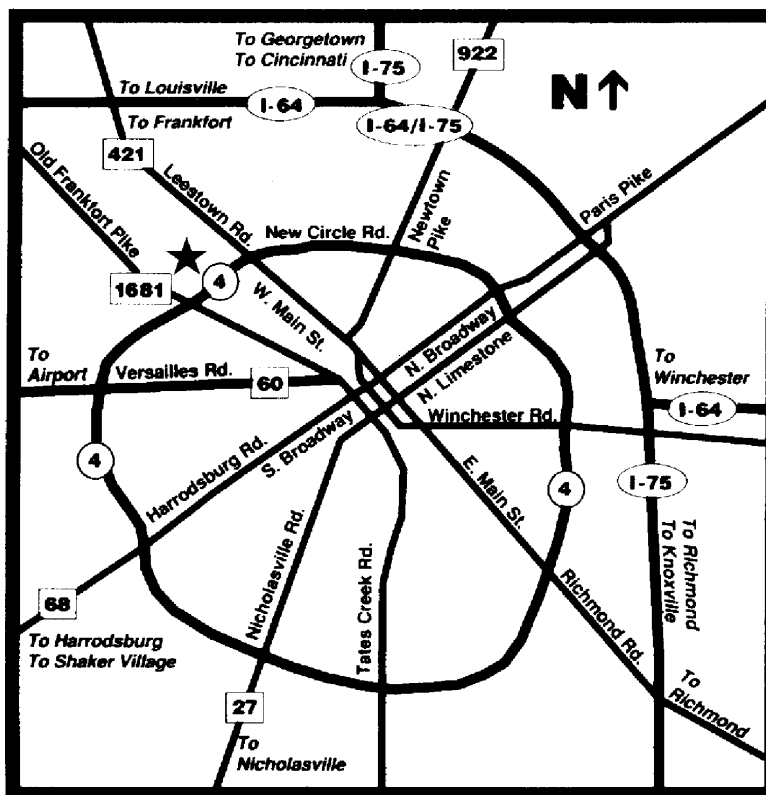
Harry Overtoom Larry Black

859-268-1942 502-695-4355

For registration questions/information:

Susan Ellingson

612-931-0853



## YEAR 2001 CONVENTION TIMETABLE

### IMPORTANT NOTE: ALL TIMES EASTERN DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

#### Tuesday July 24, 2001

3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Registration Desk open for early registration

#### Wednesday July 25, 2001

6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Registration Desk open  
 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour  
 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Scenic Bluegrass Tour  
 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour  
 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Scenic Bluegrass Tour  
 3:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. My Old Kentucky Dinner Train

#### Thursday, July 26, 2001

6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Registration Desk open  
 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour  
 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Scenic Bluegrass Tour  
 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour  
 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Scenic Bluegrass Tour  
 5:00 p.m. Board Buses for Get Acquainted Party  
 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. "Tastes of the Bluegrass" — Get Acquainted Party

#### Friday, July 27, 2001

6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Registration Desk open  
 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Margaret Woods Horse Farm Tour  
 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Scenic Bluegrass Tour  
 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. LCCA's Old/New Board of Directors Meetings  
 10:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Trading Hall available for unloading/set-up  
 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. LCCA Annual Membership Business Meeting  
 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Lionel Factory Seminar  
 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Trading Hall **open to registered Convention attendees only**

#### Saturday, July 28, 2001

6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Registration Desk open  
 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Trading Hall Available for Unloading/Set-up  
 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Public Display Area open  
 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Trading Hall **open to registered Convention attendees only**  
 10:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tour — Glitz and Antique Gallery  
 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Trading Hall open to the General Public\*  
 5:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. Tear-down in Trading Hall  
 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Cocktail Reception — Cash Bar  
 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. "Bluegrass Horse Affaire" banquet  
 (Convention officially closes after banquet)

#### Sunday, July 29, 2001

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Tear-down in Trading Hall

\* Non-registered LCCA members will be admitted free of charge after 1:30 p.m. Saturday by showing their current membership card.

**See you at next year's Convention!**  
**LCCA in Pittsburgh, PA July 24-27, 2002**

# Connections

by **George G. Nelson**

**RM 13073**

When I wrote my first “Connections” column two years ago (see *TLR*, February 1999), I told LCCAers that I was writing from the standpoint of a computer and internet novice — and I’m still in that category! I believe there are other novices among our readers, and I hope that they will be sufficiently interested in and challenged to do some “discovery learning” for themselves.

## Connecting at Dearborn

The October, 2000, issue of *The Lion Roars* included a report on the Annual Joint Convention along with many photos. Other photos of this Convention are posted on at least two web sites — South West Alabama Railroad Modelers <<http://community.al.com/cc/swarm>> and LOTS <<http://www.lots-trains.org>>. Several Mobile, Alabama-area SWARM members attended the Convention, and they had a chance to see where the “snowbirds” go when they leave the Gulf Coast just before the onslaught of hot weather.

During the LCCA business meeting at the Convention, Larry Black, director of LCCA and chair of the club’s New Millennium Committee, reported on the committee’s search for new ways and capabilities to serve our membership; including cyber-improvements to the club’s web site. The LCCA business office now has fax and e-mail capability; and each officer, director and appointed official has e-mail capability. For member convenience and access, this information is listed on page one of each issue of *The Lion Roars*.

## Other Web Sites of Interest

Two other sites were recently called to my attention. Many of you are already familiar with them but, for those who may not be, take a look at <<http://www.postwarlionel.com>>, which claims to be “the most comprehensive internet site containing detailed product and history information, hundreds of postwar Lionel train photos, and links to other quality postwar train sites!” The other is <<http://www.coilcouplers.com>>, which

includes among other features an interactive fun page that allows one to “control” a Lionel locomotive.

## Christmas in Mobile

These two photos were taken during the 2000 Christmas season in Mobile, Alabama. Both are related to the theme of CONNECTING with people who are not familiar with the hobby with an emphasis on developing interest in the hobby among the next generation. If our hobby is to grow, we must “grow our own successors.”



*This mom and family enjoyed the modular Lionel train layout set up and operated by South West Alabama Railroad Modelers (SWARM) at the Junior League’s Christmas Jubilee in the city’s downtown Convention Center on November 9-11, 2000. The center was filled with people, mostly women, who were shopping and/or looking for Christmas ideas. The SWARM layout occupied a prominent position just inside the entrance with a colorful display of train catalogs and magazines, a chart showing the relative sizes and popularity of the various scales of trains, and a listing of Mobile-area hobby shops that sell trains.*



*The second major holiday appearance for the SWARM Lionel layout was at Mobile’s Exploreum, a hands-on science center, during November 24 to December 3. During the holidays we were visited by a number of families, but when school was in session, large groups of young students came to the center on field trips. Most of the kids “swarmed” around the layout as they were released from the IMAX theater — just across the corridor from our locale. During this event we were featured on local TV newscasts at least twice. We were “ambassadors” for the train hobby and used the opportunity to extol the number of skills and talents that youngsters can put into practice as model railroaders.*

*Photographs by George G. Nelson*

# My First Lionel Christmas

by **John William Abbe**

**RM 2168**

I have operated and collected Lionel trains since 1950. They were the only trains I knew about. Every year when I received my Lionel catalog, I showed Dad and Mom my preferences — just like the catalog said to do.

One Wednesday night, Dad and I stayed home from church because we were sick. He had never done that before! He told me he wanted to show me something that was under the bed in a brown box. We get down on our hands and knees and looked; and there it was — the new Lionel 2026W Steam Freight set of 1950. We carefully opened each box and looked at what was inside. We spread out the whole train set on the floor; it was just too much of a temptation for us to resist.

All of a sudden we heard a noise; it was Mom coming back from church! We rushed to put the set away before she came into the room. When she asked, “What was going on?” we told her, “Nothing!” We never told her that we opened the train set before Christmas.

My dad passed away and went to heaven in 1959. Mom wanted to get me a train to remember him by, so she went to the Sears store during Christmas time and purchased a 2348 GP-9. It had a horn inside it. Every time she walked about the train display, the horn sounded all over the store. She found out later that the sound came from the train.

In 1960, my Mom gave me a new 3619 operating satellite car. My brother and I played with that car a lot. When released, the satellite would hit the ceiling about 10 feet in the air and come back down. My Mom got that car for us just after my grandmother went to a nursing home.

Each of these train items had significant sentimental value to them, and I would never sell the trains to anyone. Trains offer much more than “play value.” They make memories and give joy and happiness.

Trains are also biblical, as in scripture it says, “And the Lords’ train filled the temple” and “Train up a child in the way he should go!” One day in the future, these will be the trains to see!

# Upcoming LCCA Train Meets

## **Lexington, Kentucky** **March 16-17, 2001**

Harry Overtoom and a Lexington-based team will present a LCCA-sponsored train meet on Friday/Saturday, March 16-17, 2001, at the Continental Inn, US 60 & New Circle Road (1.8 miles west on US 60 from I-75, Exit 110). Setup/early bird trading for LCCA members only on Friday evening from 6 to 9 p.m. and on Saturday morning from 8 to 10 a.m. The general public will be admitted on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. LCCA members and families will be admitted free; guests, \$3.50; children under 12 accompanied by an adult, free. Co-hosts: Harry Overtoom (859-268-1942), Larry Black (502-695-4355), and Bill Crace, (859-299-2423).

## **Clinton, Tennessee** **March 24-25, 2001**

Gary Lape, Sr. will hold the fourth annual LCCA train meet in Clinton, Tennessee, on Saturday and Sunday, March 24-25, 2001. The location is the Tennessee Army National Guard Armory located at 185 Yarnell Industrial Parkway, in Clinton. Registration and setup is Friday, March 23rd from 2 to 6 p.m. and Saturday morning 7:30 to 10 a.m. LCCA trading is from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday with public trading Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tables are \$8 each. Admission charge for guests is \$3; for families, \$5; LCCA members admitted free. Operating layouts and food concessions will be available. Hosts are Gary Lape, Sr. at 865-457-8387 or by fax at 865-463-9702; Joe Glass, 865-457-3617, e-mail at <JRG027@aol.com>; and Michael D. Smith, 865-483-9608, e-mail at <MIKEDSMITH@prodigy.net>.

## **Chattanooga, Tennessee** **September 29, 2001**

Bill Stitt (423-894-1284), George Baltz (423-842-6094), and Ron Herman (423-344-5799) will co-host a LCCA-sponsored train meet in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on Saturday, September 29, 2001. The event will be held at Olph Church Parish Life Center, 501 South Moore Road (I-24, Exit 184, Moore Road) in Chattanooga. Registration and setup will be from 9 to 10 a.m. with LCCA member trading from 10 to 11 a.m. Public and guest trading will begin at 11 a.m. and continue to 3 p.m.

LCCA members and family will be admitted free. Guests will be admitted for \$5; children under 18 accompanied by an adult free. Tables \$9, no limit.

# News about Lionel® — Making the Trains



## Lionel Terminates Its American Manufacturing Operations

*NOTE: As we went to press in early February, TLR received this news directly from Lionel LLC.*

On February 1, Richard Maddox, President and CEO of Lionel LLC, announced that the company would terminate its manufacturing operations in Michigan.

In a prepared statement, Maddox explained, “After several discussions with its union and its employees, on suggestions to substantially reduce costs in order to avoid terminating the manufacturing operations at its Chesterfield, Michigan facility. No viable options were identified. As a result, Lionel management made a recommendation to, and the Board of Directors of Lionel LLC has approved, a decision to terminate the Chesterfield, Michigan, manufacturing operations.

Maddox indicated that the termination of manufacturing operations would not be immediate, but would be complete by the end of August and the Lionel distribution center (shipping and receiving) and corporate headquarters will remain in Chesterfield. To maintain its leadership position in the industry, Lionel will continue these functions in Chesterfield — consumer services, quality control, research and development, design, sales and marketing, engineering, and all current administrative functions. The Lionel Visitors Center will remain open to the public.

Maddox pointed out that the decision was based on increased costs of domestic manufacturing, increased competition and continued changes in the marketplace, and was not a reflection on the fine men and women of the Chesterfield manufacturing operation.

Maddox said, “The termination of manufacturing operations in Chesterfield will affect approximately 325 employees over the course of the next three to eight months. However, it is important to note that we will be keeping our distribution center and our corporate headquarters in Chesterfield. Both of these operations will provide employment opportunities for at least some of the employees displaced from our manufacturing operations. The employees of our distribution center, who until now have been part of our manufacturing operations, will continue to be represented by the UAW.”

According to Maddox, “The company has hired Modern Human Resource Systems (MHRS), an organization with a national reputation for helping employees displaced as a result of downsizings and closings. MHRS will assist displaced employees in finding new work and will make a variety of career transition services available to all associates through a series of specialized workshops, small group meetings and individual counseling sessions. MHRS will also be enlisting the help and support of various federal, state, and local agencies to insure that employees receive all the assistance needed to find employment.”

# Lionel News & Views

by Bill Schmeelk

RM 6643

## Lionel and the Nuclear Age

Lionel has involved trains in the nuclear age ever since demonstrating their knowledge of atomic energy concerns in 1958 when they released the No. 6805 Atomic Energy Disposal Car. In the next year, they introduced the No. 57 AEC (Atomic Energy Commission) switcher. There were even stories at the time that Lionel locos were used to move radioactive materials in AEC test labs. Recently, we've seen AEC tank cars with liquid and luminous AEC boxcars.



1958 catalog artwork courtesy of Lionel LLC

The latest entry in this area by Lionel is its new No. 463 Nuclear Reactor. The first hint that Lionelville was going to have its own nuclear reactor can be seen on page 25 of the 1958 Lionel consumer catalog — it shows a drawing on the background of the page that appears to be a nuclear power plant.

In volume five of the classic six-volume series by Tom McComas & James Tuohy, *Lionel, A Collector's Guide and History*, the authors document many of the items in Lionel's archive of production items, prototypes and other ideas that for one reason or another never made it into production. On page 50, we see a photo of a Lionel prototype for the nuclear reactor that Lionel planned, probably in the late 50s. Now, 42 years after the 1958 catalog drawing appeared, Lionel has produced the reactor as part of its Archive series. Even its number is typical of postwar production. This new model doesn't depict a modern

nuclear reactor, but rather a 1950s image of one. We can only guess why it took so long for Lionelville to get atomic power. Perhaps the Lionelville residents protested against having a nuclear power plant in their backyard.

Lionel's new model is certainly more refined than the prototype pictured in the TM book, but it is quite clear that Lionel's postwar design was the basis for this new model. According to the TM book, the original model worked with a hand crank and had some revolving lights under the dome. Lionel's new model has a chrome-plated sphere where the original was painted silver.

Just what does this accessory do? Glad you asked. First, the moving crane arm picks up "raw material" from a Lionel gondola car. No gondola is supplied as any ordinary one can be used. This "raw material," mock

uranium I suppose, is actually small steel balls, 3/16-inch in diameter. The motorized crane uses a magnet to pick up the balls 1, 2, or 3 at a time. The crane arm brings these balls to a loading port on the dome. **Photo 2** shows the crane just before dropping off its load of steel balls. As the crane arm continues past the loading port, the balls are dropped off and roll into the dome. As the interior

lights blink in three colors and shine against a prismatic reflector, the balls roll through the dome on a zigzag path. Through a process that is apparently proprietary to Lionelville, the energy from them is extracted. The balls, now having given up their energy, continue out of the

opposite side of the dome and fall into a round container on the base. During this procedure, a silver gate at the front of the reactor opens and allows a number of "radioactive isotope spheres" (small glow-in-the-dark balls) to roll out against the unloading door. A bluish

glow can be seen at the door. **Photo 3** shows the silver gate and the red unloading ramp. The ramp in this photo is shown in its lowered position. This procedure continues as long as the unit is switched on. When all the raw





material has been loaded, and there is a supply of isotope material against the loading ramp, the empty gondola can now be loaded with the isotope material. You can use the same gondola or bring up a second one. When the unload button on the controller is pressed, the red unloading ramp pivots down and the isotopes roll into the waiting car. The blue glow now blinks, as the isotopes are unloaded. When the unload button is released, the ramp closes and the blinking stops. The isotopes can now be carried off to another location, perhaps to the Lionelville power plant.

The Nuclear Reactor is made with die-cast metal parts, stamped metal parts, and plastic. To reset the reactor for subsequent deliveries, the isotope balls are loaded into the dome from the rear. **Photo 4** is a rear view showing the red loading tray on the diameter of the dome. Just below this tray you'll notice an on-off switch. This switch controls the lights inside the dome and allows them to be turned off without disconnecting the accessory from the transformer.



The reactor is surrounded with a low steel fence on which there are several signs warning of danger and radioactivity. At the back corner, shown in **photo 5**, there is a shed where all of the power connections are made. I particularly like the wire connectors. In addition to the knurled nuts we are used to, the posts have a hole in them allowing easy insertion of a wire before tightening the nut. This allows a positive connection without having to wrap the end of the wire around the post.



The crane, although motor driven, can also be operated with a hand crank. In **photo 2**, you can see a small silver lever protruding from the roof of the building near the base of the crane. This lever is used to select between motorized or manual operation. The instructions suggest that the manual hand crank be used to set up the accessory and position it properly according to the car you use.

In **photo 6** the building has been removed and we can see the mechanism inside. The building is held in place with screws from underneath. There are many screws underneath, and only four need to be removed. If you have a need to do this, be careful which screws you remove. When the lever is in its rear position, as shown, the gear connected to the motorized drive is disengaged and another gear engages the hand crank. The motor and gear reduction are located within the silver housing. I decided not to go any further with the



disassembly. The crane arm, the crank holder, and much of the drive system are die-cast metal. The gears are brass.

**Photo 7** shows the linkage under the dome that transfers the movement of the crane, up and down to other moving parts. These include the silver



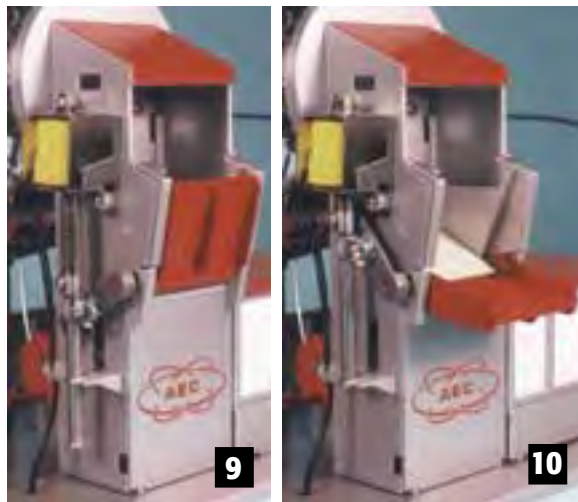
gate at the front and the internal mechanism that dispenses several of the loaded isotope balls each cycle.



**Photo 8** shows the reactor with the top half of the dome removed. This is held in place with one screw at the front and two tabs at the rear. The top half of the dome is substantially made of metal. It is thoughtfully lined with clear plastic that prevents dust from accumulating inside the dome. The lower half of the dome appears to be plastic. Inside we can see the modern electronic lighting system. The red and yellow LEDs chase while the larger green LEDs blink on and off. Here you can also see the prismatic reflector that adds to the lighting effect. The LEDs are part of a circular circuit board that has other components to operate the lights. Just below the larger prismatic reflector is the ramp on which the steel balls roll down to eventually reach the opposite side of the dome where they exit. The ramp has diverters on it so that the ball is delayed slightly and runs down a zigzag course.



The removal of one screw allows the solenoid housing to be removed as seen in **photo 9**. In this photo the solenoid is off and the unloading ramp is in its upper position. When the unload button on the controller is pressed, the solenoid is energized and the door is lowered as in **photo 10**.



The controller is one we've seen before. It is similar to the O-gauge remote control track controller, with the exception that the button on the left is a slide switch labeled "On-Off" and the button on the right a momentary push button labeled "Unload." Three wires from the controller are connected to the shed shown in **photo 5**. Two wires from the transformer connect to the remaining posts. The instructions call for an operating voltage between 12 and 18 volts AC. I hooked it up and everything worked just as it should. The motorized crane reverses itself at the end of each stroke and continues up and down as long as the on-off switch is in the "on" position. I set my ZW to 12 volts and the crane operated just fine. When I tried the unloading door, I found that the door did not quite open far enough and the balls did not run down the ramp. I first suspected that the lever on the solenoid might have need adjusting, but found that all that was necessary was to increase the voltage slightly and it functioned perfectly. No other adjustment was necessary.

This accessory is not offered in a Command version, and this is for a very good reason. Now that the new SC-2 is available, a separate version is not necessary. The SC-2 is a more powerful version of the SC-1 controller. The SC-1 could only handle 1 amp while the SC-2 will handle 15 amps, more than enough amperage to operate most accessories. We'll have more on that in a later issue.

Lionel's new Nuclear Reactor operated flawlessly. Being especially fond of postwar Lionel, I particularly enjoyed the 1950s look of this accessory. It certainly has the flavor of the carefree days we dreamed of in the fifties. Where else but in Lionelville would "radioactive isotopes" be transported in open gondolas? Only in the same town where glowing "radioactive waste" is transported on flatcars. I'm glad to see that Lionel has taken an undeveloped idea from the company's 1950 engineers and

brought it proudly to fruition. This also gives us hope that perhaps other ideas that Lionel never completed might still see the light of a Lionel locomotive.

On the same page in the T & M book is also pictured a mock-up of an operating grain elevator. Might we expect to see this in the future? At least we know that Lionel considers these treasures worth looking into and it gives us hope for continued excitement as we relive our boyhood dreams.

If you'd like to see more of what's in Lionel's archives, the 116 page, 8-1/2 x 11 inch, Volume Five of the McComas and Tuohy *Lionel, A Collector's Guide and History*, is available in a softbound edition for only \$9.95 plus postage. It can be ordered directly from TM Books and Videos at 800-892-2822. This book includes photos you'll see nowhere else of many of the treasures of Lionel's past.

### Artrain Begins New Series

Artrain is beginning a Series II Lionel model train car set. As with the initial series, the first entry in the second series will be a boxcar. **Photo 11** shows the new Artistry of Space boxcar, which celebrates the NASA Art



Program. This boxcar sports all the top-of-the-line features, including all metal die-cast sprung trucks, metal frame and door guides, and stars which light on the sides of the car. The stars are actually LEDs which are powered from the track. This car will be limited to only 500 pieces and is available for a tax-deductible donation of \$125. Additional cars are available for \$100 donations. Shipping is \$6 per car. You can order the car directly from Artrain at the following address:

1100 North Main St.  
Suite 106  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

*Photographs by Bill Schmeelk*

Bill Schmeelk's address is shown on page 1.

# LCCA Board Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2000

## Holiday Inn at York, Pennsylvania

President Al Otten called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m., and Dienzel Dennis, Secretary, called the roll. The following officers and directors were in attendance: Al Otten, President; John Fisher, President Elect; Dienzel Dennis, Secretary; Eric Fogg, Treasurer; Harry Overtoom, Immediate Past President; and Directors Larry Black, Bill Button, Don Carlson, Lou Caponi, and Bill Schmeelk. Barry Findley was also in attendance as a member of the Millennium Committee.

Mr. Fisher reported on the local LCCA train meets that have been held (6), and the future meets that are scheduled (5). Report accepted.

Treasurer Fogg distributed the financial report and balance sheet. We are still in a sound financial position with no outstanding bills. The treasurer's report was accepted.

Dienzel Dennis, club secretary, reported on the membership status of the club. As of October 19, 2000, the last number assigned by our business office was #25308. We have 27 Charter Members, 1 Honorary Charter Member, 1 Honorary member, 8 Courtesy Members, 70 Foreign members, 410 Family Members, and 10,002 Regular Members for a total of 10,519 active members. After 30 years we have a total dropped or deceased number of 14,789. The secretary mailed out 241 letters this week to members who have not renewed their dues yet in hopes of getting them to consider becoming reinstated. He is also up to date on mailing out the *Roster* to the new members enrolled each month. The secretary's report was accepted.

Larry Black reported on the status of the Millennium Committee and its work. Our web site is being re-worked and updated, including visitor's site, members only site, and possibly an *Interchange Track* site. The board is very pleased at the way we are moving forward into the Technology Age. Report accepted.

Mr. Caponi gave the Product Development Committee report. The Stocking Stuffer Airport Terminals are scheduled for delivery in the last week of October. Four hundred and ninety four have been sold so far. The Lexington Convention car for 2001 will be an L&N Horse Car. The board discussed its color, lettering, etc. Approximately 2000 cars will be produced. Report accepted.

The Constitution Committee reported that the constitution is status quo as printed in the *Roster*. They are open for any suggestions from the Board. Report accepted.

The Convention Site Committee reported that both Las Vegas and Pittsburgh are being strongly considered along with other sites such as Milwaukee, Cleveland, Indianapolis and others. Mr. Caponi gave an interesting report on his trip to Pittsburgh. That site has a lot of promise. Report accepted.

Mr. Otten informed the Board that the 2000 Convention cars should be shipped the first week of November and the 2000 Engine and Caboose by the 15th of November, 2000.

President Otten stated that Mike Mottler, *The Lion Roars* Editor, is stepping down; but he was happy to inform us that Bill Schmeelk will soon be taking over as Editor. This transition should be smooth.

Bill Button reported next on the *Interchange Track*. Things are going pretty smoothly other than the late arrival of some ads and the difficulty in reading some handwritten ads. Mr. Otten will have the business office send the Editor an updated disc each month of address changes and new members. Report accepted.

Mr. Overtoom informed us that the LCCA archives will be moved from a 12x12 to a 12x20 container in a climate controlled storage unit. He also gave an update on the Lexington 2001 Convention. Everything seems to be falling into place including three train ride tours, one of them on a dinner train. Mr. Black made a motion with a second by Mr. Fisher "to have the trading floor open on Friday night from 6 to 9 p.m. for LCCA members only. Saturday, the trading floor will be open for members only until 1:30 p.m. The general public may enter at that time for a fee and then the trading floor will close at 5:00 p.m. There will be no trading on Sunday." The motion passed and Mr. Overtoom's report was accepted.

Break 4:45 to 4:55

Mr. Fisher and Mr. Carlson gave the 2000 Convention wrap-up report. The bottom line was it was a great convention and the club made a little money. Report accepted.

Mr. Overtoom next reported on member complaints. The Board went into executive session from 5:35 to 6:24 p.m. After returning to open session, Mr. Black moved that Mr. Don Carlson be removed from the office of Director of the LCCA due to the letter previously discussed in the executive session. Mr. Overtoom seconded the motion, and it was passed with 3 ayes, 1 nay, and 1 absention.

The per diem was set and the meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dienzel Dennis, LCCA Secretary

# Train Talk

by Richard Maddox

President, Lionel LLC



Richard Maddox

As I left my home this morning, I was greeted by a clear blue sky. Hanging over my neighbor's house was a huge, golden-hued, full moon still bright in the morning light. Clean white snow carpeted the ground, and behind me the sun announced its arrival with brush strokes of pink and red all across the horizon.

I was struck with the realization that I could not identify the first time that I felt such an emotion from nature's beauty nor why I felt it. It seems obvious that we should all see beauty in a sunset, but who taught us that response? Perhaps we are born pre-programmed to love the ocean's salty breezes, the colors of autumn, and the majesty of mountain peaks. I wish I knew the answer because I'm convinced that whatever it is that teaches us the beauty in nature is the same force that causes some of us to pick up a Big Boy and exclaim, "Awesome!"

I've tried many times over the years to identify if the model railroader has a different genetic make up than the general public, or is he or she a product of parental influence or environment — perhaps from living life next to the railroad tracks!

Today while meeting with Russ Blum, one of Lionel's electrical "gurus," I asked him how he got his seven-year-old son so interested in railroading. His reply was, "I don't know, he just always seemed to love trains." Russ is not a serious railroader, so his case shows that railroading is not genetically passed on from generation to generation. It is either something we learn or "catch" (like the chicken pox) and remain stricken with it for life.

Whatever the truth, maybe I'm convinced that our numbers are swelling. Even though I've spent years trying to figure out how to excite more people into becoming railroaders, there appears to be some sort of master plan

that continues to supply just the right number of new enthusiasts to our ranks. This might explain why we hear many say, "I just woke up one morning, and I was hooked!"

Divine intervention? Maybe. I'd love to hear from some of you about how and when you were "hooked." As for me, I can't remember when I marveled at my first full moon — or my first train set.



Lionel catalog 2000 artwork courtesy of Angela Trotta Thomas

## Train Meet at the Annual Convention

The train meet within the annual LCCA Convention is the "really big show" of the year. LCCA members registered for the Convention will be admitted to the Trading Hall on Friday evening, July 27th, and on Saturday morning, July 28th, until 1:30 p.m. at the Lexington Center, Heritage Hall East & Center, at 430 West Vine Street (adjacent to Hyatt Regency Lexington) in the host city. Friday evening and Saturday admittance (up to 1:30 p.m.) will require full LCCA convention registration.

The general public and LCCA members **not registered** for the annual Convention may enter the Trading Hall on Saturday afternoon, July 28th, from 1:30 p.m. to the closing hour at 5 p.m. The Trading Hall will not be open on Sunday.

LCCA members and immediate family admitted free. Public and guests, \$4; children under 12 w/adult, free. Tables available only with LCCA convention registration. Co-hosts are Harry Overtoom (859-268-1942) and Larry Black (502-695-4355).

