

Volume 37, No. 3 February, 2008

# The Lion Roars



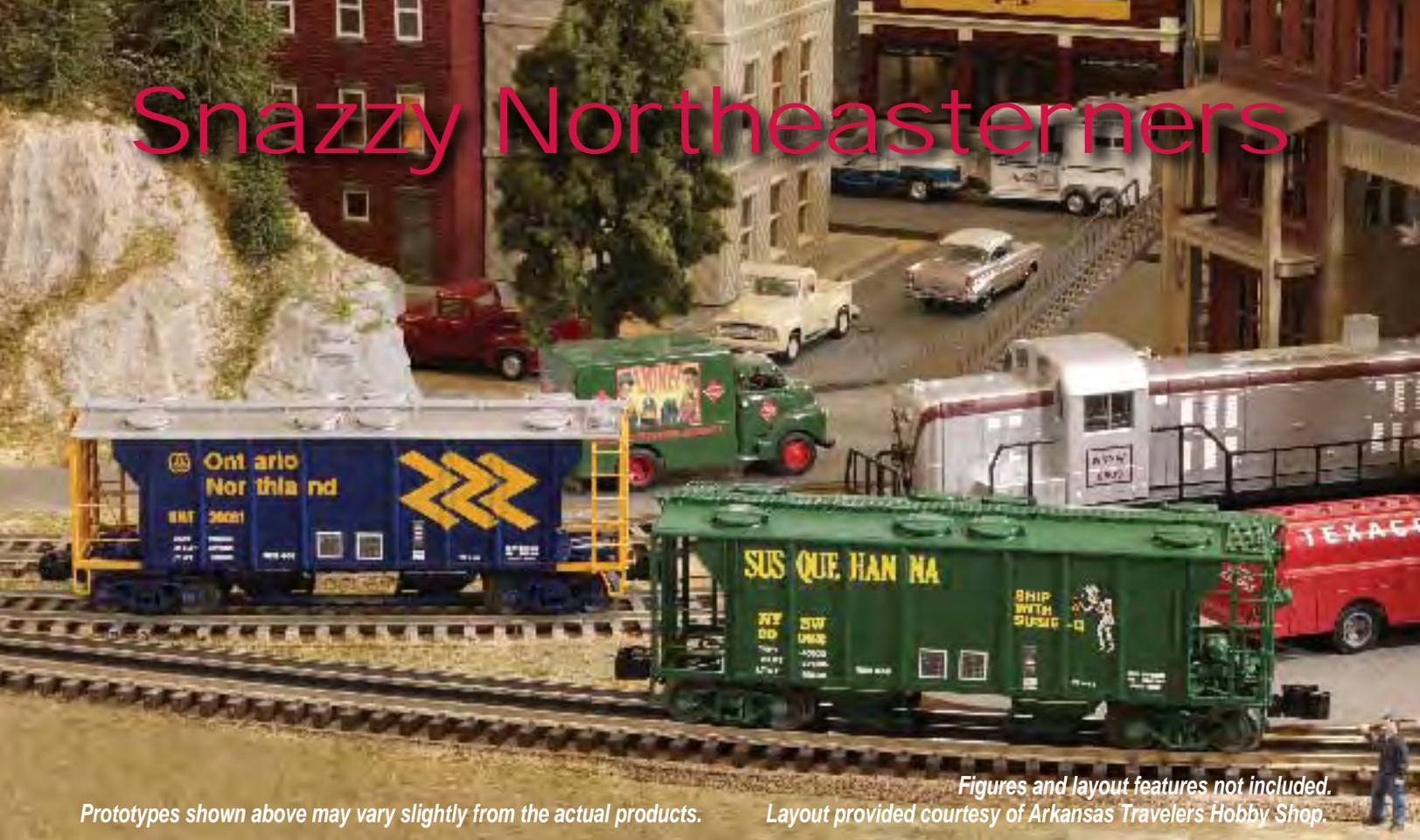
PUBLISHED BY THE LIONEL® COLLECTORS CLUB OF AMERICA IN FEBRUARY, APRIL, JUNE, OCTOBER, DECEMBER



Follow the Lightning Stripes for an  
Excursion in scenic New York State

**FINGER  
LAKES  
RAILWAY**

# Snazzy Northeasterners



Prototypes shown above may vary slightly from the actual products.

Figures and layout features not included. Layout provided courtesy of Arkansas Travelers Hobby Shop.

The northern international border unites more than divides two great nations, and in that spirit, the Lionel Collectors Club of America (LCCA) offers these two distinctive cars of that area — “Susie Q” and Ontario Northland RR — to members. This two-car set of PS-2 covered hoppers is the 2008 Convention car offer. Limit: two sets per member.

The Susquehanna car will include the classic rendering of the “Susie Q” character never before presented on a hopper car. This pair will appeal to Susie Q and Canadian model railroaders, niche collectors seeking rolling stock of northeastern regional railroads,

and collectors of LCCA Convention cars. This production run will be limited and will include these quality features:

- produced by Lionel® exclusively for LCCA
- die-cast fully sprung trucks with rotating roller bearing caps; truck sideframes are painted to match the cars
- roof hatches actually open and close
- crisp graphics with SUSIE Q and ONR décor
- added-on (not molded-in) ladders and brake wheels
- detailed undercarriage
- discrete LCCA 2008 Convention designation on the underside.

## Order Form for “Susie Q” and ONR Cars

Once submitted, LCCA will consider this a firm, non-refundable order. Deadline for ordering: June 30, 2008.  
 Note: UPS cannot deliver to a post office box. A street address is required.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ LCCA No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip + 4: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Check this box if any part of your address is new.

### 2008 LCCA Convention Car

- “Susie Q” & ONR PS-2 covered hoppers  
 1 set \$129.90, 2 sets \$259.80 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (S&H&I included)  
 Extended S&H&I outside cont. U.S. \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$19 per set  
 Illinois residents only, apply 7% sales tax \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$9.09 per set

Total: (in U.S. funds) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Do the Math:

- Payment Plan A:** My check for the full amount is enclosed made payable to “LCCA” with “TLR/2008CC” written on the memo line.  
 **Payment Plan B:** Bill my credit card for the full amount.  
 **Payment Plan C:** Bill my credit card in 2 equal installments; 1st installment due now; 2nd installment due 6/30/2008.  
*There will be absolutely no refunds of any payments if you subsequently decide not to complete this purchase.*  
 No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Disc  MasterCard  Visa Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
*The 3 digits at the signature panel on back of your card*

Sig: \_\_\_\_\_  
 By my signature, I authorize LCCA to charge my account for the amount shown according to the terms and conditions cited herein.

This form may be photocopied. Mail it with your check enclosed to the best toy train club on the planet:  
**LCCA Business Office • Dept TLR/2008CC • P.O. Box 479 • LaSalle, IL 61301-0479**  
 For additional information, visit our website: [www.lionelcollectors.org](http://www.lionelcollectors.org)

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**ON THE COVER**

*Tour #6 of the LCCA 2008 Convention will be an excursion trip in the scenic Finger Lakes region of New York State with former NYC motive power on point.*

**Contacting the LCCA Business Office**

Members can contact the Business Office for routine services through the club's website at [www.lionelcollectors.org](http://www.lionelcollectors.org), by e-mail at [lcca@cpointcc.com](mailto:lcca@cpointcc.com), by fax at 815-223-0791, or by mail at: LCCA Business Office, P.O. Box 479, LaSalle, IL 61301-0479.

Business office services are limited to providing or processing changes of address, changes of phone number, "make good" copies of *The Lion Roars*, applications for membership, replacement membership cards, reinstatements, death notices, Convention registration, and orders for club collectibles.

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*The Lion Roars* (USPS 0011-994) and (ISSN No. 1079-0993) is published bimonthly except August by the Lionel Collectors Club of America, 1622 Fourth St., Peru, IL 61354-3527. Subscription rate of \$15 per year is paid through membership dues. Periodical postage paid at Peru, IL 61354-9998 and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *The Lion Roars*, 1622 Fourth St. Peru, IL 61354-3527. The LCCA is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation. Lionel is a registered trademark and is used with the permission of Lionel L.L.C. Copies of Lionel copyrighted materials have been used in this publication with the permission of Lionel L.L.C.

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*Business Office* - Their role is limited to routine services.  
*Secretary* - Inquiries about membership lapses and administrative support.  
*Membership Chair* - Joining LCCA and membership questions.  
*Immediate Past President* - Complaint against another member.

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# Special Report

## LCCA at WGHOT Shows

by Eric Fogg RM 12768

and John Fisher RM 6541

*Editor's Note: Instead of the traditional President's Report, President Johnson invited Convention Managers Fogg and Fisher to share news about LCCA promotional ventures in WGHOT shows in cities around the country. This report is based on recent appearances in Sacramento and San Diego, California.*

### The Crowds Are Unbelievable

There are people of all sizes and ages lined up at the entry doors to The World's Greatest Hobby on Tour™ show 40 minutes or more before the opening. But what one notices first are the wide-eyed children. They run ahead or literally pull parents down the street. Thanks to Thomas™ and The Polar Express™, they want to see the trains! While ours may be a graying hobby, it's refreshing to see so many children (and so many adults) so interested in toy trains.

The crowds are not by accident. WGHOT invests heavily in advertising, especially television, in each city it visits. Begun in 2004, WGHOT has opened in 16 cities nationwide. Total attendance is now approaching 500,000.

This isn't a traditional train show; it's more like a trade show. The exhibitors span the entire field of the hobby. All



*A visitor to the WGHOT show signs up as a new member of the club. Welcome aboard!*

the major train manufacturers are represented with eye-catching displays and operating layouts. Many regional and some national suppliers also attend. Local companies and hobby shops, modeling groups with portable layouts, and railroad entrepreneurs make up the rest of the mix, which changes with each show.

### A Perennial Question

Another interesting phenomenon is the questioning from attendees, starting with "Does Lionel still make trains?" After staffing a booth at several of the early WGHOT shows (LCCA has been to 11 events to date), the club suggested that Lionel® participate – if only to respond to this often-asked question. Since their first show in 2005, Lionel and LCCA have always had booth space right next to each other. "We're the club and they're the company" is how we usually answer the Lionel question. The club's great, long-standing relationship with Lionel generates powerful synergy in this trade show setting.

The club's large display backdrop features dynamic orange and yellow artwork of son, dad, and locomotives from the 1954 catalog. Our



*CAL fan and club member David K. Dunlop (RM 10710) at right visited the WGHOT show in Sacramento, CA, and dropped by the LCCA booth to talk trains with Past President, current Director, and Convention Manager Eric Fogg.*



*Past President and current Convention Manager John Fisher chats with a drop-by visitor to the LCCA booth at the San Diego event. Can't miss us ... we're right next to the Lionel booth.*

convention hall with hard concrete floors; however, we meet many great people. We've added so many new members to the club that we quickly forget the hard work.

So, the next time the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour comes to your area, go see for yourself. Drop by the LCCA booth and introduce yourself; we always like to visit with members. It's a perfect place for the world's greatest toy train club to be. Long before these shows emerged, we already knew this was the "world's greatest hobby." 

*Photographs by  
Eric Fogg*

LCCA booth is impossible to miss, and we like it that way. It's full of samples of club-sponsored products and examples of our publications including *The Lion Roars* and the *Interchange Track*. We show several Convention Cars and the "Halloween" General set with its Add-on Cars.

### It's like Show and Tell

When people stop to "talk trains," we discuss the many benefits of membership in LCCA and suggest, "If you love toy trains, join the club!" We've been pleasantly surprised at the number of new members we have recruited at each show. In addition, we hand out membership applications to people who may decide to join the club after the show. We never miss the chance to promote our annual Convention.



*John inspects a Lionel item brought by a show-goer to the club booth for an informal appraisal.*

Probably the second-most-frequently-asked question is, "What are my trains worth?" We guide people toward reputable reference sources, and we often offer a free informal appraisal. We spend a lot of time meeting people, answering questions, and making ourselves useful. Who knows when and how it might benefit the club?

### Fun, Friendship, Fatigue

While representing LCCA at a WGHOT show is always a lot of fun, it's also hard work. Each day starts at 10 and doesn't quit until 5. There's set-up and tear-down in a drafty

### WGHOT shows in 2008 will visit:

- Norfolk, VA      February 16 & 17
- Kansas City, MO      March 15 & 16
- Louisville, KY      June 28 & 29.

# One Landmark Locomotive, Two Perspectives

*Editor's Note: This review of Lionel's new Union Pacific Big Boy steam locomotive provides two perspectives. Erol's viewpoint is of a hobbyist who does not purchase scale locomotives costing \$1,000 or more and requiring lots of "1:48 real estate" for operations. The second viewpoint was prepared by Eliot Scher, an LCCA member who purchases scale locomotives exclusively; units often costing \$1,000 or more. The Big Boy locomotive tested for this review is owned by Eliot.*

One such locomotive is Lionel's new Big Boy. This loco qualifies for landmark status because of its high level of detail, and – more importantly – it is the first one to operate with Lionel's new Legacy™ remote control system. Moreover, some features first introduced on more expensive locomotives will eventually trickle down to less expensive ones, so this loco may be a harbinger of things to come.

Legacy is the successor to Lionel's TrainMaster Command Control™ (TMCC) system. After a lengthy delay in design and production, Legacy was recently presented to the marketplace for hobbyists. In August 2007, LCCA members received a \$30-off discount coupon from Lionel to purchase this remote control system. It lists for \$300.

## Big Locomotive, Big Price, Lots of Features

Lionel's Big Boy locomotive was featured on the cover of its 2006 *Volume 2 Catalog*. Next to the Harry Potter



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## Viewpoint I by Erol Gurcan RM 26800

During the last two years, my reviews in *TLR* have concentrated on less expensive locomotives and train sets. In my view, the two major commercial O-gauge magazines often ignore this segment of the market; they choose instead to concentrate on more expensive trains, as some car magazines focus on exotic, expensive, and powerful automobiles. However, not everyone can afford a \$1,000-or-more O-scale locomotive and/or has a large layout equipped with O72 minimum radius curves necessary to run it.

However, when a Lionel® locomotive comes along that can be considered significant, it needs to be discussed regardless of its price or curvature requirement on a layout.

Hogwart's Express Set (reviewed in the December 2007 issue of *TLR*), the Big Boy was one of the most anticipated Lionel trains released in 2007.

The locomotive lists for \$1,700, but a Legacy package comes with it. It measures almost 32 inches long. When you see it for the first time, its sheer size overwhelms you. The *Lionel 2006 Volume 2 Catalog* states three cab numbers are offered: #4014 (6-11104), #4023 (6-11123), and #4024 (6-11122).

Features include the Odyssey™ speed control system with on/off switch, state-of-the-art Railsounds 5.0™, Dynachuff™ synchronized chuffing (which shifts through 15 levels of intensity as the locomotive gains speed), Fatboy® speaker, Pittman® motor with flywheel, wireless tether between the locomotive and tender, and a laundry list of

## On the Test Track

The locomotive was tested with the Legacy command control system, an MTH® Z-4000™ transformer, and Atlas® 21<sup>st</sup> Century™ track with O72 curves (the minimum radius for this loco).

Forward low speed momentum was steady and smooth in the three-to-five scale miles per hour (SMPH) range. No hesitation was noted. The locomotive ran smoothly through all track switches in both forward and reverse. No stalling or derauling occurred. Grades did not pose a problem and the loco maintained a constant speed even when pulling several box cars. Stops were smooth and gradual thanks to the momentum flywheel.

The locomotive excelled pulling its 10-car load at a moderate speed in the 20-30 SMPH range. It looked graceful at these speeds since there are two sets of drive wheels



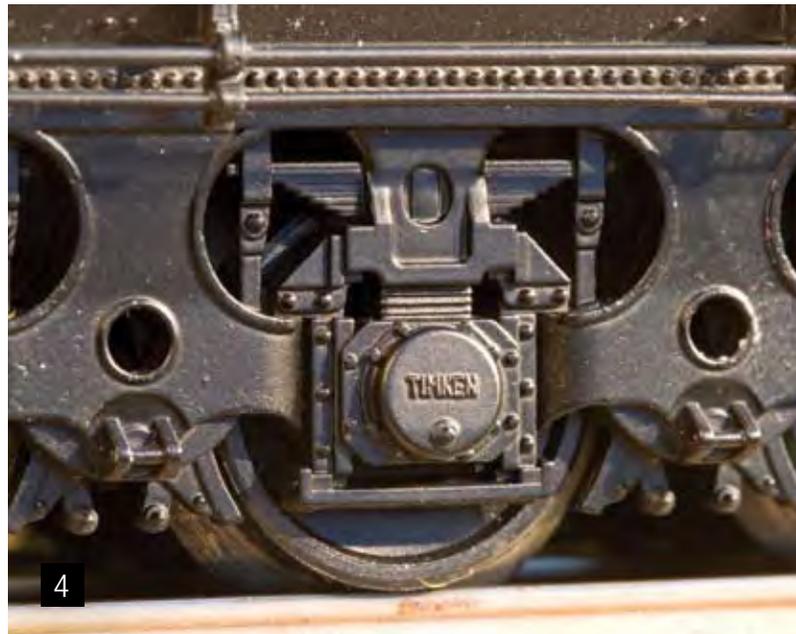
other features one would expect on a locomotive in this price range.

### State of the Art Detail

Simply stated, the detail on this locomotive is excellent

– to the point of being the most realistic looking Big Boy model I have ever seen (see **photos 1 and 2**). Among the details that set this loco apart from previous models are numerous red valves on the side and inside the cab of the loco, separately applied piping, and a swing-out front coupler. More importantly, the separately applied details do not look like they will break off easily from even normal handling. Paint application of the black and grey colors was outstanding.

The tender also has terrific detail – a realistic coal load, lots of rivets, and 14 wheels round out its details (see **photos 3 and 4**).



moving at the same time on this 4-8-8-4 articulated loco. I estimate the locomotive should have no problem pulling 40-50 scale boxcars or traveling at higher speeds in the 50-60 SMPH range.

Because of the locomotive's large size, there was considerable overhang around O72 curves. If you have not yet purchased this loco but intend to, make sure there is a couple of inches of clearance on both sides of a curve to avoid plowing away trackside accessories, structures, or scenery.

### Sounds and Smoke

The Big Boy comes with Lionel's state-of-the-art Railsounds 5.0. CrewTalk™ dialog was clear and sufficiently loud. I loved the sound of the chuffs at low speed. The sound volume level of the chuffing can be adjusted with the hand-held remote. The chuffing sound gave off an echo effect.

The Legacy remote has a slider rather than a button for the whistle control. The intensity and sound of the whistle can be changed depending on how far the slider is moved. It has been commonly called a "quilling" effect. The function worked very well when I repeatedly played with it.

The locomotive has a fan driven smoke unit; its output can be adjusted to low, medium, or high through the Legacy remote. Smoke output in high was excellent and quickly filled the room by rising high into the air thanks to not one but two exhaust stacks (see **photo 5**). Together, they created

### Conclusion

Overall, the detail, performance, sounds, and smoke output are excellent. One could argue that is to be expected from a locomotive that costs \$1,700. Even if you deduct the \$300 Legacy system elements from the equation, we still have a \$1,400 locomotive here. A high price does not always guarantee that the important aspects of a locomotive will be right, but with the Big Boy, they are.

The question that I ultimately need to decide is, "If I had O72 curves on my layout, would this locomotive be worth the high cost when other Big Boy locomotives costing hundreds less might achieve almost the same result?" Before running this locomotive, my initial answer would have been "No," but after running it and appreciating its detail and impressive state-of-the-art Railsounds 5.0, I think I would have to get one. It would, of course, be a once-a-year locomotive purchase; at least that's what I would tell my wife. This locomotive is the first to run with the Legacy control system which means it has potential future collector value and is significant to the hobby from a historical perspective.

### Viewpoint II

by Eliot Scher RM 27844

Let me begin by saying that this review will not be as big as the Big Boy. An O-scaled Big Boy is, indeed, gigantic. Thinking back to the O27 steamer that I adored as a boy, I'm



amazed by the new Joshua Lionel Cowen series Big Boy; it is probably five times the length and weight of my first toy train from the 1950s.

### Best Described with Lots of Adjectives

For all of those lucky enough to own this monster, the news gets better and better. Lionel's new Big Boy can best be described as the most amazingly detailed, smoothest running, best sounding, and most exciting locomotive I have ever owned. Admittedly, I am a detail nut, but I am also a performance aficionado. In both categories, the Big Boy exceeded my expectations.

When my Big Boy arrived, I immediately put it to work. I initially operated the loco without Legacy and used the TMCC Cab-1 control. I quickly discovered that this was the smoothest running locomotive I have ever owned. Later, the Legacy system arrived, and I installed it promptly.

a wide, realistic smoke plume. This locomotive used lots of smoke fluid during our testing, but that is a small price to pay for great smoke output. When smoke output decreased, we added about 30 drops of fluid. Setting the Legacy controller to medium produces less smoke, but it's still very good smoke output overall.

The pictures of the Union Pacific Big Boy show one of the most powerful and awesome machines ever to ride the rails. The UP had several versions of the Big Boy and Lionel has produced it in several different road numbers and in at least two variations. I have the #4014 with the cooling grates on the deck of the pilot. I have always felt that the cooling grates made the Big Boy look ever more beastly – if that is possible.

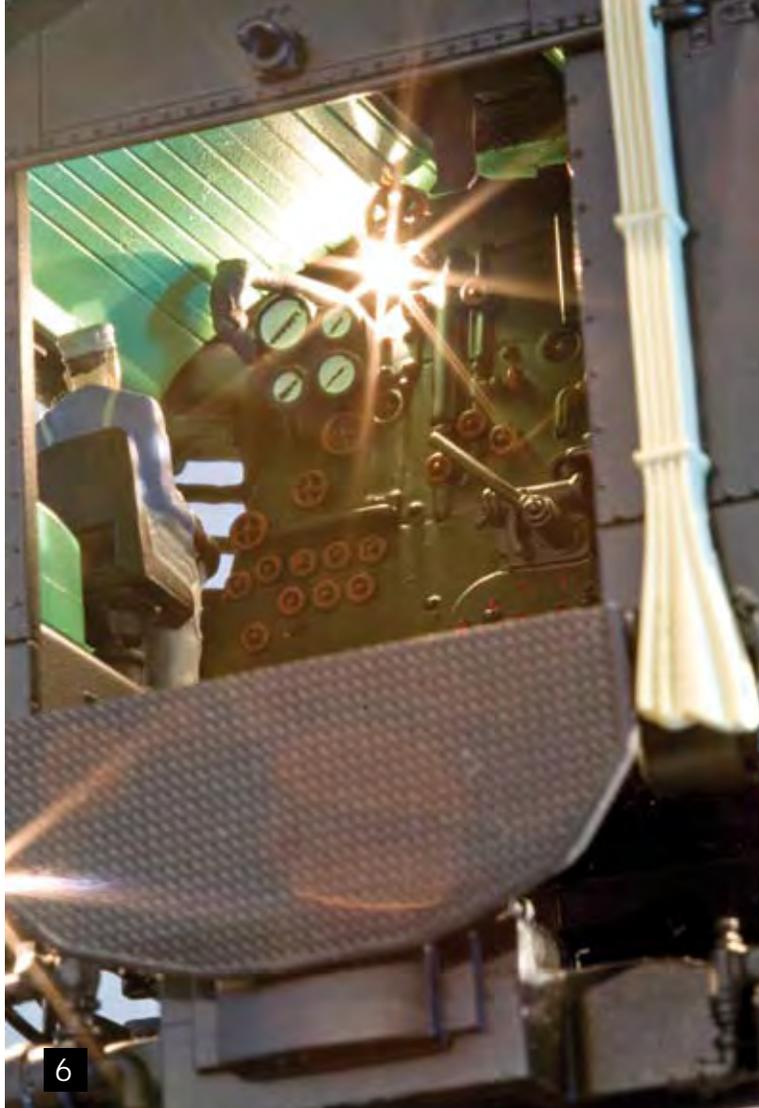
### Lots of Details

The Big Boy bristles with detail. I know that description has become somewhat timeworn because most three-rail scale locomotives have become more and more detailed. We are living in the golden age of hi-rail trains, and manufacturers are racing to produce the most highly detailed trains they can imagine. Pipes, rods, turn-wheels, smokestacks, bells, wires, lights, rivets, opening hatches, and more adorn this model. I am not an expert on steam locomotives, but I can tell you that by writing this review and taking the accompanying photographs I discovered details on the Big Boy I had not seen. I am certain there are more details yet to be discovered.

The Big Boy has several engineer seats behind the engineer and fireman. The cab is beautifully detailed, and you can look into the cab in several different ways. I love looking into the cab through the windows. Clear, movable windows on each side of the loco show the engineer and fireman sitting at their stations. You can look into the cab from the back and see the gorgeous green paint inside the cab, backhead gauges, and the flickering firebox (see **photo 6**). You can even look into the cab by opening the hatch on top. Way cool. I even took several photos using a macro lens peering into the cab from behind.

### About the Tender

For detail-minded people, the tender is as detailed as the locomotive with a beautiful coal load, incredibly detailed trucks, and lights galore. The Big Boy tender comes with an auger (the mechanism that mechanically stoked coal into the massive firebox) that you can view by poking through the tender swing-open doors and popping up the coal load. I loved the auger, but probably only a few owners will pop up



the coal load to see this feature more than once. I would have preferred a second Fat Boy speaker instead of the auger. In addition, I don't know if the real Big Boy had tender chains on the trucks, this one does not. The trucks are so highly detailed that a photograph taken in the proper light might not reveal that this was a model.

One of my favorite details on the Big Boy are the lights that come on when the locomotive stops. These lights are inside a highly detailed light structure, and there are six – three on each side of the locomotive. You'll enjoy discovering the other details for yourself.

I would say that Lionel has upped the ante on the Joshua Lionel Cowen Series locos. I own six or seven Cowen

Series locomotives including the UP "Challenger," and I will say the Big Boy is in a class by itself. I can only imagine an expensive brass locomotive having more detail than this heavy, beautiful, die-cast monster. See **photo 7**.

### About the Engineering

After getting the Big Boy hooked up to the tender (no easy task, but more about that later), I had to "program" the loco. Unfortunately, Lionel put the Run/Program switch underneath this locomotive. If there is one locomotive I don't want to lift off the track in order to fiddle with its control switches, it is this one. I wish Lionel had used one of the empty hatches on the top of the tender as a location for this switch.

I chose train ID number 14 – derived from its cab number, 4014 – to make it easy for this 58-year-old to remember how to address the loco. I even have trouble these days remembering where I put the Cab-1/Legacy hand-held controller in the train room.

### Great Sounds, Smoke, and Operation

After removing the Big Boy from the rails, programming it, flipping the switch underneath to "Run," and re-railing it, I pressed the ID address buttons and the loco roared to life. I do mean roared. The chuffing and other miscellaneous steam sounds that come from the tender are deep and husky. Compared to the Lionel scale Norfolk and



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Western #611, the Big Boy sounds are almost as deep and husky. The N&W #611 has two Fat Boy speakers, but the Big Boy has one because of the auger in the tender.

I've read the banter at online bulletin boards that the Big Boy whistle is not quite prototypical. Having listened to Big Boy videos and recorded sounds, I agree. I would prefer a prototypical whistle; however, "loco love" can forgive this instance of not-quite-perfect-ness. That being said, the whistle sounds great to me!

What I do love is that the Big Boy moves so slowly and so smoothly. I have seen high-end locos move this slowly but not this smoothly. I have seen them move smoothly, but not this slowly. It is truly a joy to watch. Thick billows of smoke emerge from one of several removable smoke stacks you can fit onto your loco. This Lionel steamer smokes better than any Lionel steamer I have seen. I love the giant puffs as much as I do the smoke volume. Fortunately, I have an exhaust fan in my train room. Without it, the Big Boy would set off the smoke alarm.

I own my fair share of high-end steamers, and these trains often have a problem traversing switches, especially when moving backwards. I have several sets of switches in my passenger yard including an O72 curved switch that backs immediately into an O72 wye switch. Together they make an "S" pattern, which is usually "death by curvatures" to steam locomotives. With trepidation, I backed the Big Boy through those "S" curves a half-dozen times, first

slowly and then at 15-20 scale MPH – smooth as silk with no derailments. Better yet, the loco did not stall on long switches. I have Atlas O® track and several #5 switches in addition to the O72 curved and wye switches. Most of my locos stall when rolling slowly over them. The Big Boy never stalled. I can say without any hesitation, the Big Boy is the best running model locomotive I have ever seen in any scale – period. This is the locomotive to beat; see the detailing in **photos 8, 9, and 10**. And we're not through yet.

### Legacy Makes It Better

I won't bore you with the tale of how much time passed until I got my Legacy controller. Lionel announced this system at the LCCA 2006 Convention in Denver but there were product development problems and a related delivery delay. In any event, how does the Big Boy perform with Legacy?

After all of the superlatives used in this review, I must be careful not to sound too much like a teenager in love with Peggy Sue. Sorry sweetheart, but the Legacy control is fabulous, fantastic, and fun. I can't review all its features here, so I will focus on my favorites.

At York in October, I wrestled the Legacy controller away from Erol and got to play with a Legacy feature – the quilling whistle. I had heard so much about it, I quilled with anticipation. I thought the quiller would become my favorite feature, but it's not. I love the train brake. Used in conjunction with Legacy Momentum Control (which is

adjustable by holding the “M” button and turning the velocity knob), the train brake provides an incredibly realistic train-driving experience. Have you ever stood at trackside as a train slowed down with its flanges screeching and the braking system struggling to slow and stop the train? Legacy recreates those magic moments. I have a grade with O99 curves and when the Big Boy glides down, I move my train brake higher and spin the velocity knob counter clockwise. It is that easy. My Big Boy and its consist screeches all the way down the 10-to-12-foot grade before it stops. The first time I used this feature my jaw dropped. You must try this!

On the subject of the quilling whistle, I can say it is wonderful. I hit the whistle with sudden jabs and got “Toot.” Try that with any other loco. The whistle appears to have three or four levels of intensity. If you pull the whistle lever to “4,” back it down to “1,” then back to “3,” you can create a “whistle signature.” Of course, you can use any combination you like, but it sounds great to me.

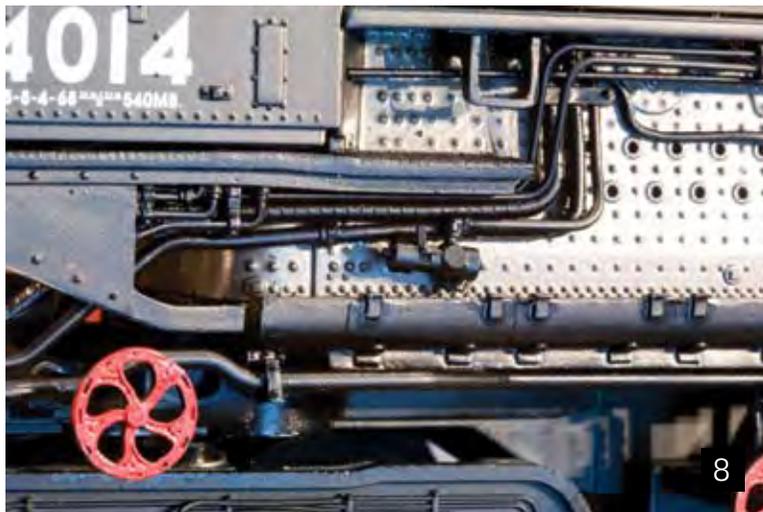
### Nothing's Perfect

Are there any negatives in the Big Boy? Yes, but only a few. Two weeks after I received my Big Boy, a short circuit caused the loco to lose all sounds and most functions, plus a buzzing tender. Lionel repaired the locomotive and returned it to me in 96 hours with a fresh battery and a new Legacy module installed. That level of service is unheard of, but you heard it here first! Thanks, Big L.

Lionel chose to put a flat metal strip above the tender latch mechanism that the “hook” from the loco drawbar drops into. Initially, I could not couple the latch. I called Shawn at Just Trains and he said to back the loco into the latch, get the loco hook under the metal strip to lift it up, and drop in the loco's hook. I tried it but could not do it. Lionel says the metal strip is there to ensure that loco and tender do not come apart. When I asked Neil Young about this feature he explained, “That retainer keeps the weight of the engine and tender from bending the drawbar and causing a short circuit when the drawbar hook touches the track. The engine is so heavy we had to add this. It also prevents false or intermittent triggering of the chuff through the wireless tether from loco to tender on rough track.”

One has to turn this monster upside down twice to change “Run/Program” switch. Lionel should change this. I used to work out with less weight than this locomotive. Also, I would trade the auger for another Fat Boy speaker. Despite these few negative points, I suggest that you get yourself a Big Boy if you can. I adore mine. 

*Photographs by Eliot Scher*



# LCCA Product Development Shop

by Lou Caponi  
RM 8735

First, I would like to wish all of you a happy and healthy 2008. I hope the holidays were great and Santa left a mountain of orange and blue boxes under your tree!

Since these product reports are written weeks in advance of printing *TLR*, I'm hoping by the time you read this article that the LCCA 2007 Convention Car will be on its way to all who ordered it. The production delay was due in part to the effort to get the C&NW colors on this tank car exactly right.

We have been advised by Lionel® that the three New Haven #209 Add-on units should be in our hands by mid-April 2008, and the New Haven passenger trains should follow by the end of April. That means these items should be in your possession by May. LCCA and Lionel truly regret these production delays, but these items will be definitely well worth the wait.

## Predictions Aren't Promises

LCCA was initially informed that these club products would arrive on American soil at the end of December 2007. Because of unforeseeable production schedule delays at the factory in China, that arrival estimate was pushed back a few weeks. This delay involved our items and several pieces in Lionel's 2007 catalog product line. Delays are frustrating for all – LCCA members, your club's leadership, and Lionel.

Many of you sent e-mails asking about product delivery, and the best tip I can give is – visit the club's website for news updates in the NEWS FOR MEMBERS section. I share the latest news about products currently in the pipeline – good and bad – with our website editor. That information is posted promptly; often within hours of discovery.

## The Time Machine

Let me explain the time required to produce most LCCA sponsored products. It begins as an idea from the think tank, takes shape as a concept for presentation to Lionel executives, and goes to their art department in Michigan for preparation of preliminary drawings.

Once we're happy with that rendering, we confer with the company's product development and production staff to determine if our product is do-able and also affordable. Tooling, electronics, and deco costs are carefully assessed. Once we have a green light on the drawings, the factory in China produces a mock-up according to the artwork.

This task can take a couple of months. Usually this actual-size, rough mock-up is merely an approximation of the appearance of the final product. Its colors, detailing, and other points are reviewed and modified if necessary.

Lionel incorporates the requested changes to the mock-up and – you guessed it – the item goes back to China so that the changes can be locked in. In most cases, a revised mock-up is required to assure fidelity to the plan. You guessed it – the revised item comes back to the USA for final review and approval then it is sent back to China with accompanying notations as may be required.

You remember the game of "Telephone" we played as children; the starting message was never the same at the end of the circle of communication. LCCA and Lionel and the factory in China face a similar situation in describing through two-way channels the changes to be made to the mock-up. In our case, the circle extends halfway around the world and through language translation! While children can laugh at the result of their game, adults can become quite frustrated by a time-consuming, detail-driven process.

Usually, the mock-up makes three to five trips across the Pacific Pond before the product is approved and ready for actual production. We are subject to the unpredictability of production schedules and work flow through the factory in China. In effect, we are at their mercy.

## A Six-month Production Cycle – More or Less

LCCA must place the production order for an approved item no later than July 1<sup>st</sup> in order to receive the finished product at the end of that year. We are always on target in presenting orders from members to Lionel, and the company promptly sends the production quantity to the factory. Then the gears are engaged.



Artwork provided by Lionel LLC

Sometime in the following three months an actual pre-production sample of the product arrives in the USA for inspection and approval. We scrutinize it carefully, make changes that may be necessary, and return the sample to China. Then the production run starts with the hope that everything will go smoothly and you'll receive your product at the expected time. But it's never super-smooth.

## The Last Mile

Even if the finished product arrives in the USA in a timely manner, the items must clear U.S. Customs. Nowadays, that's an unpredictable timeframe. We are grateful that the officers take their job seriously and make diligent inspections for the sake of national security, but our trains are not necessarily on a "fast track" through Customs. After all is said and done, the time span from the initial idea to delivery of the product to your train room can take 18 to 24 months.

## Who Ya Gonna Call

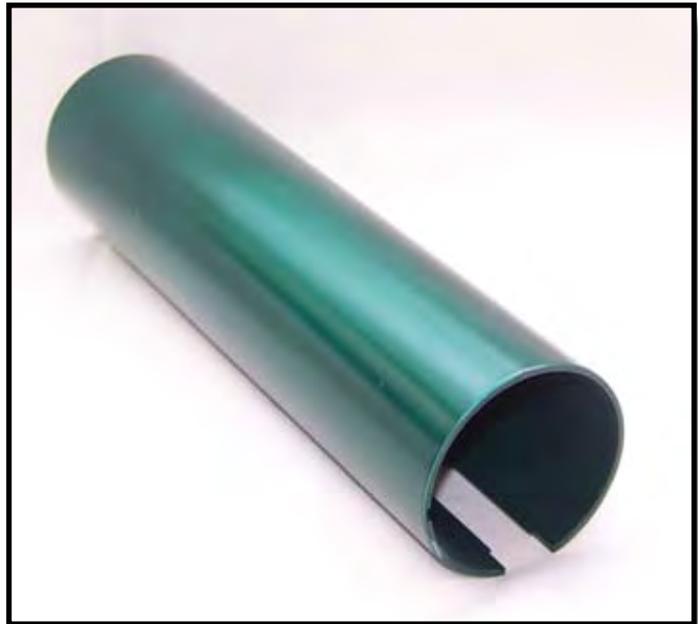
MEMBERS WHO HAVE QUESTIONS REGARDING CLUB PRODUCTS ON ORDER (INCLUDING PAYMENT, SHIPPING, ADDRESS CHANGE, ETC.) SHOULD CONTACT ME BY E-MAIL AT [CAPONILJ@COMCAST.NET](mailto:CAPONILJ@COMCAST.NET) OR BY PHONE AT 484-431-8529.

There's no need to call LCCA Board members or the President or Secretary. They may not be able to provide the proper information, and they will probably route your call to me for follow-up. To save time and energy, contact me directly. I'll be glad to help. Watch for announcements at the website and in *The Lion Roars*.

## Inquiring Minds Want to Know

There are some new and exciting club products now in the pipeline to Lionel. One item will be here by July 2008. It's not a train. LCCA has created and Lionel will produce a series of structures with deco and detailing never before done by Lionel – until now. 

*Photographs by  
Mike Mottler*



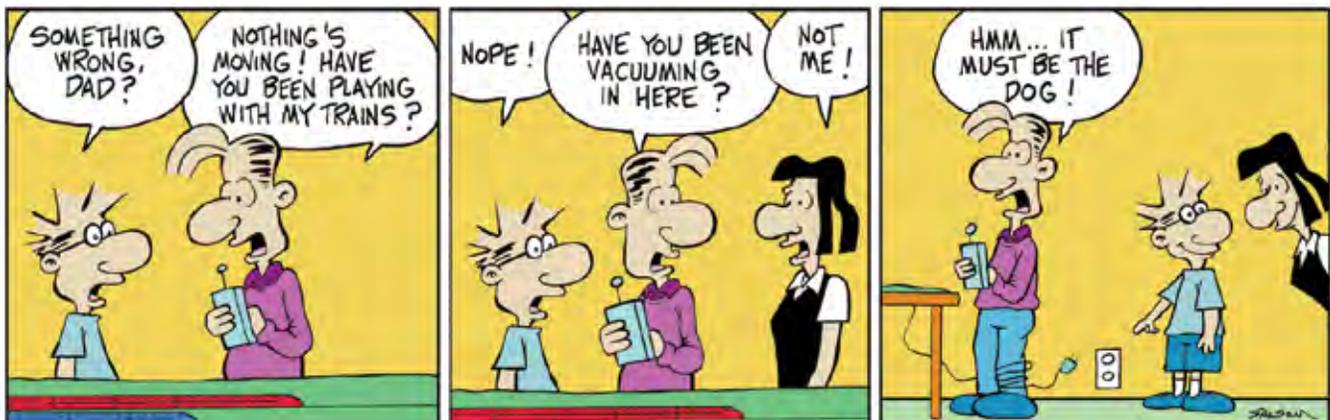
*Above: This initial production sample of the 2007 Convention Car was rejected because the green color wasn't quite right.*

*Below: Several attempts were required to render the red-orange New Haven color correctly; as shown here.*



## Toy Trunk Railroad

by Erik Sansom



# A Modest Museum Diorama

by Bill Fuller  
RM 11746

The executive director of the High Plains Western Heritage Center in Spearfish, South Dakota, likes trains, and an omission in the museum's Transportation Room was proving bothersome. Although modes of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century transportation in western South Dakota were well represented by stagecoach, tally-ho wagon, buckboard, chuck wagon, buggy, sleigh, and even a hearse, nothing informed visitors of the area's railroad history.

While lugging in a full-sized steam locomotive was hardly practical, models could certainly be used to represent the real things. A display case had recently become available when its mounted wolf found a new "den." A few challenges did exist, such as designing a railroad display for the high and narrow case, making it somewhat interactive rather than just a three-dimensional representation, and locating models to be displayed. Fortunately, one of the museum volunteers and a life-long model railroader accepted the challenges.

First to be constructed on the floor of the case was a G-gauge representation of the Burlington's narrow-gauge route through the Black Hills to Deadwood. A Bachmann 2-8-0 Consolidation was custom-lettered for CB&Q engine



538, outfitted with engineer and fireman, and coupled to a passenger coach. Copious use of Woodland Scenics™ grass, Life-Like™ evergreen pine trees, a large package of light green lichen, and a few scoops of Kitty Litter™ ballast mimicked Black Hills scenery. Two important touches remained – how to make this interactive and how to represent the ubiquitous whitetail deer population that visitors would surely have noticed while traveling through the area.

The "interactivity" was achieved by cutting the track and inserting commercial rollers from JAK® under the drive wheels. A hidden transformer was pre-set to turn the rods and wheels slowly and connected to the rollers through a doorbell-type push button mounted on the wooden frame of the case. The wiring also fed through an adjustable timer built with components from Dallee Electronics®. The result is that one push of the button starts electricity at a pre-set voltage level flowing to the track for a predetermined length of time, after which it automatically shuts off until the button is pushed again. Twenty seconds was the best operating time for viewers to appreciate the intricate rod motion on the locomotive without becoming bored. Real aficionados can always press the button again to continue the action. Of course, the locomotive headlight also illuminates while power is applied, and viewers seem to enjoy that aspect as much as they do the rod and wheel motion.





The white tail deer population was created with a few models obtained from a local farm supply store, and they're happily nibbling away at a fruit tree purchased from a doll house merchant.

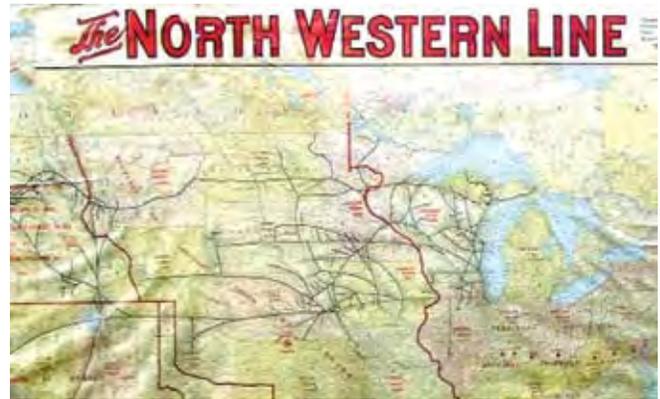
On now to the top shelf in the case. There, the C&NW is represented as it loads longhorn cattle driven up from Texas on one of the historic trails. They'll soon be on their way to the slaughterhouses of Chicago. This scene proved to be more challenging because of the necessity of building a loading chute from scratch. Nonetheless, armed with a variety of scale wood from my wife's dollhouse-size



miniature supplies and the memories of the loading chute I played on as a child, I cut, glued, and stained bits of wood until a reasonable loading chute emerged. Meanwhile, models of longhorns were located in a toy farm set by Ertl®. Yes, they're less than proper scale size, but thanks to the skill (and also the forbearance) of my wife, each was painted to look exactly like one of the mounted or living longhorns at the museum, right down to the brands; the sole exception being the steer that represented Old Blue from the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum in Texas!

The track running alongside the corral and loading chute carries a Lionel® postwar O-gauge #1110 steamer followed by a modern-era Lionel C&NW tender, an MTH® RailKing™ C&NW stock car, and an old Atlas® bobber caboose. A few cottonwood trees evolved from real oak twigs and lichen, while one bare twig became a very realistic dead snag. A buckboard sent by a fellow model railroader in Florida is parked in the shade of some of the trees. Now, how to make this shelf interactive as well?

Remember the Lionel C&NW tender? It's comprised of the shell from Lionel #6-18612, an O27 4-4-2 locomotive and tender released in 1989 and remounted on the chassis of Lionel #6-16673, a Lionel Lines tender with air whistle from 1993. The track it rests on is powered by a small DC plug-in wall transformer, one of the little square blocks that powers calculators and that sort of thing. The power pick-up rollers under the locomotive are insulated from the center rail with plastic tape so that they receive no power – because we don't really want the engine crashing through the end of the display. As with the G-gauge model on the floor of the case, the wire from the transformer to the track passes through another push button. Because the power is already converted to DC, merely pushing the button sends power to the track and sounds the air whistle.



Mounted above the push button for the whistle is a sign illustrating some of the most common railroad horn and whistle signals so that visitors can try their hand at various combinations.

Rounding out the display are two large wall maps from 1912 that we believe were given to local schools by the C&NW as geography teaching aids (and, of course, as publicity for the railroad), a vintage Railway Express Agency sign, a silver REA Special Agent badge and a brass REA police badge, a telegraph key appropriately labeled "Voice of the Railroad," and a hand lantern retrofitted with a flickering bulb. The stand supporting the case bears reproduction heralds from the major railroads that served South Dakota: C&NW, The Milwaukee Road, and Burlington.



The display not only reminds visitors of the railroad heritage of the high plains but also suggests the realism that can be duplicated by model railroads in both O and G gauges. The push buttons provide some visual and auditory experiences that a static display alone could not have achieved. The models and memorabilia are much more interesting than the wolf mount that formerly called the case its "home." 

*Photographs by Bill Fuller*

# Convention Update

by John Fisher RM 6541  
and Eric Fogg RM 12768  
Convention Managers

## Register NOW!

Between *The Lion Roars* and our website, you have no excuse not to be informed about registering for our 2008 Convention! Hotel room reservations and tour registrations are moving briskly. If we run out of hotel rooms, we might be able to find more; however, that's not true with tours. Many are limited in capacity, so when the available seats are gone – they are gone. Don't disappoint the family – register NOW!

## See For Yourself



Western New York State has some of the prettiest scenery you'd ever want to run a railroad through. Perhaps that's why the area has always been a hot bed for modeling and layouts.

Don't take our word for it – come and see for yourself. The two exciting rail tours we have lined up – the Finger Lakes Scenic Railway and the Medina Railroad Museum Train – will give you an unparalleled chance to experience just what railroading was like in this area. If any tours could be called “limited,” these two are. Get your seats now so you don't miss a minute of nostalgia railroading in the New York Central style.

## Thinking of You Always

It all began at the Milwaukee Convention. Those of you who registered received a handy blue mesh bag, perfect for holding lots of Lionel® train boxes, compliments of LCCA and our friends at *Classic Toy Trains* magazine. In St. Louis you received a roomy blue briefcase along with a nifty matching name badge holder. In Denver you received a black collapsible bag promoting our 2007 Convention in Chicago. At the Windy City, each registrant received a blue cooler that held your refreshments yet required only a little space.

Since 2004, these attendee gifts were provided by the host hotel in the city we planned to visit next. It was a part

of our negotiated contracts. More importantly, each item was selected with you in mind. We've equipped you for a good train outing, whether at our Convention or your local train show. The bags are roomy, practical, and Lionel boxes fit inside with ease. We know because we tested them before we placed the orders. The opposite is also true; when collapsed, most of these items take up little room when not in use. And it's all on purpose. One more way we strive to make each annual Convention the best it can possibly be and give real meaning to our goal of continually improving membership benefits. So what will you get as a free registration gift in Buffalo? Come join us and find out! You must be present to get one.

## California Dreamin'

Deadlines being what they are, we're writing this column in early January from Sacramento. We started the new year by doing the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour™ show in Sacramento where we signed up a number of new members! Californians are looking forward to our arrival in the Golden State in 2009.



From here we'll move to San Diego to do the WGHOT show there. In between, we spent our time visiting with the “can do” team from the Radisson Hotel Sacramento and making sure we're on track for the Convention. We also visited with the tour folks, and they have planned a great line-up, including a visit to the must-see, world famous California Railroad Museum. But wait, let's not get ahead of ourselves – register now for Buffalo! But a little “California dreamin'” isn't out of the question!

## You Asked For It

We had such a great time in Denver in 2006 that many of you have asked if we're ever planning on going back. The correct question is not “if” but “when.” The answer is, the last full week in July, 2010.

In late 2007, we signed a contract with the Denver Marriott Tech Center – the same great hotel we used in '06. We also made a commitment to Steve Lee and the wonderful folks at the Union Pacific Steam Program to use their magnificent historic equipment again – steam engines included. It's too soon to dream about what engine(s) might be available, but it'll be a ride not soon forgotten! 

# Save 10% on Amtrak Trains to/from the LCCA 2008 Convention

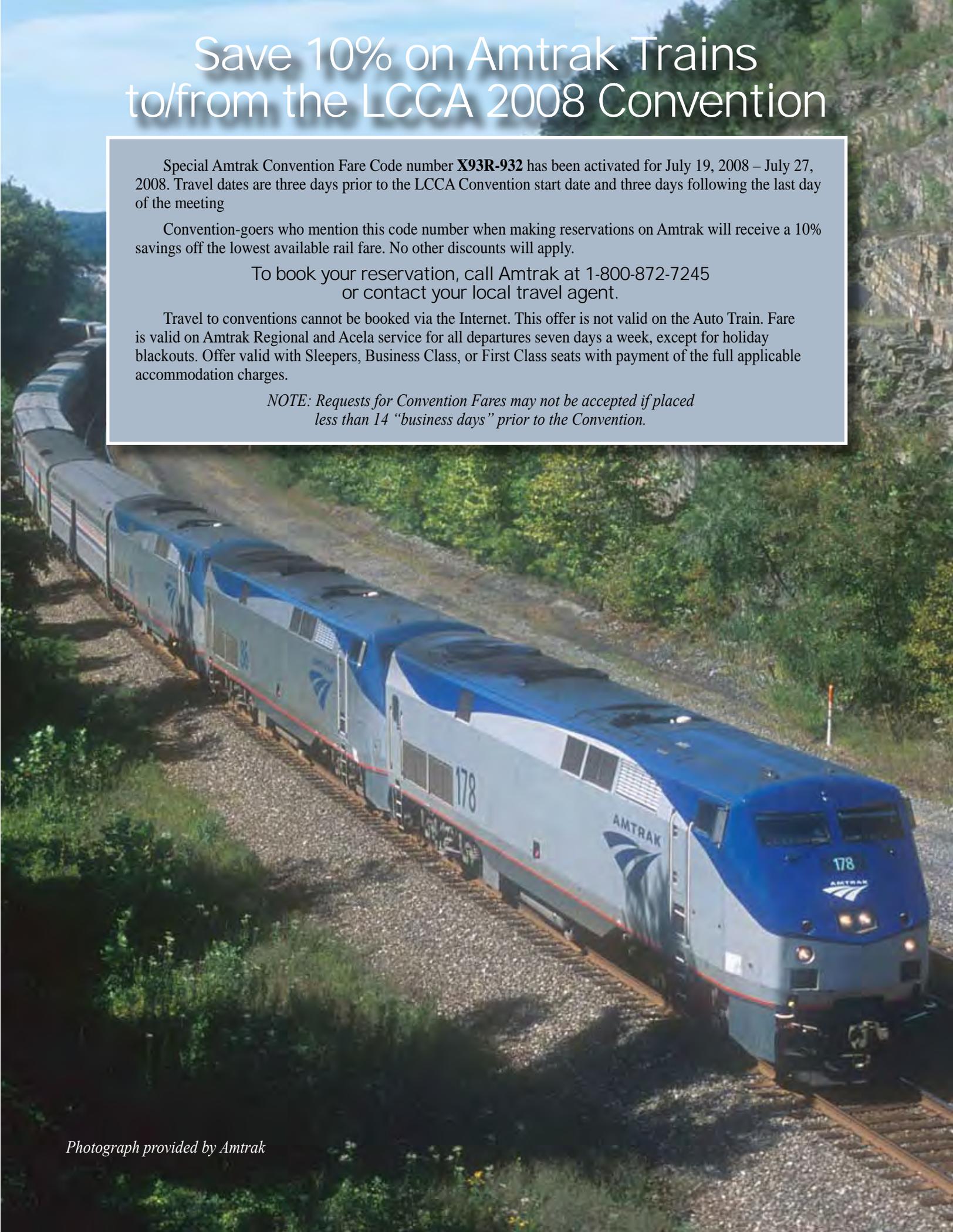
Special Amtrak Convention Fare Code number **X93R-932** has been activated for July 19, 2008 – July 27, 2008. Travel dates are three days prior to the LCCA Convention start date and three days following the last day of the meeting

Convention-goers who mention this code number when making reservations on Amtrak will receive a 10% savings off the lowest available rail fare. No other discounts will apply.

To book your reservation, call Amtrak at 1-800-872-7245  
or contact your local travel agent.

Travel to conventions cannot be booked via the Internet. This offer is not valid on the Auto Train. Fare is valid on Amtrak Regional and Acela service for all departures seven days a week, except for holiday blackouts. Offer valid with Sleepers, Business Class, or First Class seats with payment of the full applicable accommodation charges.

*NOTE: Requests for Convention Fares may not be accepted if placed less than 14 "business days" prior to the Convention.*



**LCCA**  
**38th Annual**  
**Convention**  
**2008**

Buffalo,  
New York

Niagara,  
Canada

**Tour #1 - Niagara History "On the Rails"**  
Monday, July 21 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
\$82 per person



Experience the unique and exciting "living history" of Niagara County on the Medina Railroad Museum Train Ride. With historic NYC E units in "lightning stripe" livery on point and stainless steel Budd cars in tow, you'll enjoy the scenic and historic ride from Medina to Lockport (and return) while interacting with costumed characters from Niagara's history. Encounter fugitive slaves and conductors of the famed Underground Railroad and observe ruthless bounty hunters board the train to find them. Learn



about Niagara's industrialists and entrepreneurs, Erie Canal workers, farmers, and Civil War heroes – all through interaction and fun during your rail experience. These interactions enable you to learn more about the impact of rail on Niagara County!

Your trip includes ample time at the Medina Railroad Museum with its huge memorabilia and toy train collection, fire-fighting collection, and 204-foot-long operating train layout. Also enjoy a delicious barbecue luncheon provided by Keith's Famous Barbecue with all the fixin's.



**Tour #2 - Trains in Erie, PA**  
Tuesday, July 22 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
\$76 per person

In the 1980s, a group of GE retirees and members of the General Electric Elfun Society initiated a project to accumulate and validate material of historic interest and to interview persons of responsibility and knowledge in the Erie plant operation. The preservation of this history of the GE Erie operation became the Museum of Erie GE History.



The displays feature early Erie plant history, foundry operations, direct current motor, an operating HO gauge model railroad, and more. Be sure to visit the Museum Gift Shop on your way out.

Next, it's off to the MARX® Toy Museum featuring wonderful Marx Toys such the famous big wheel, large running train displays, tin toys, and Erie's Famous Mouse House, a 16-room cardboard box mansion built as if mice had gathered things from "downstairs."

The history of trains then continues with lunch at the Concourse of Union Station – a 1927 restored train station. Also visit the Erie Brewing Company and learn how beer is made; of course, there are samples of Erie's finest! Travel time is approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

**Tour #3 - "... on the Erie Canal"**  
Tuesday, July 22 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
\$77 per person

Much remains the same today on the Erie Canal as it was in the 1800s. Hand-dug to connect the Hudson River with the Niagara River, the 363-mile grand old canal is truly a great engineering feat! Enjoy an informative narrated two-hour cruise on this historic waterway and through the Lockport Locks aboard a Coast Guard-inspected vessel. Your trip is followed by a sit-down lunch back at the Lockport Locks and Canal Side Center.

After lunch, board the Lockport Cave & Underground Boat Ride on the Erie Canal for an exciting 70-minute guided tour through America's past. You'll explore the historic Erie Canal Locks 67-71, constructed in 1838.



You will also view ruins from an earlier industrial age, walk safely through a water tunnel that was blasted out of solid rock in the 1850s, view stalactites, flow stone, various geological formations and artifacts left behind by the men who built the tunnel in the early days of the Erie Canal. If you are lucky, you may even find a fossil or two.

The next part of your journey is a one-of-a-kind! Embark on America's longest underground boat ride through a trip of wonders. Marvel at artifacts left by miners on the Erie Canal over a century ago and view cave formations in their early stages of development. Visitors are awestruck as they take a ride that has been described as "both peaceful and eerie" as the boat glides through the lifeless water illuminated only by small, sporadically placed electric lights.

**Tour #4 - Casino Night**  
Tuesday, July 22 1 – 9 p.m.  
\$32 per person

***NOTE: This tour is for ADULTS ONLY; must be at least 19 years old. Proper proof of citizenship required when traveling into Canada.***



Start by experiencing the Fallsview Casino Resort, an opulent and spacious gaming floor with over 3,000 slot

machines and 150 table games. Your dinner buffet at the Casino is included. Visit the Galleria Shops, with a variety of retail boutiques and restaurants located right in the Fallsview.

Right outside the Casino you'll experience the power of the Niagara with an evening self-guided tour of Niagara Falls. The adjacent streets are filled with museums, souvenir shops, gaming arcades, restaurants, clubs, and tourist attractions of all kinds.

***Tour package includes: luxury motorcoach transportation, five-hour visit to the Fallsview Casino Resort, full dinner buffet, and \$10 casino coin voucher per person!***

**Tour #5 - The Niagara Falls Experience: USA & Canada**

Wednesday, July 23 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

\$85 per person

***NOTE: Proper proof of citizenship required when traveling into Canada.***



The wonders of the world come alive on this fabulous tour featuring both the U.S. and Canadian sides of The Falls. Travel to the U.S. side of the Falls to visit Goat Island and Terrapin Point for a view from the brink of the Upper Niagara River Rapids and American Falls.

Next you're off to the Niagara Reservation State Park and Prospect Point Observation where you will descend in the Niagara Gorge aboard the historic Maid of the Mist for an unforgettable cruise to the base of the Horseshoe Falls. A delightful full luncheon overlooking the Falls with a spectacular view is planned.

Following lunch, we'll enter Canada to visit Table Rock, the floral clock at the Niagara Park and the Whirlpools.

***Tour package includes: luxury motorcoach transportation, first-class step-on-guided tour of Niagara Falls USA and Canada featuring all highlights, Maid of the Mist Boat Tour, full luncheon overlooking the Falls, applicable taxes and meal gratuities.***

## Tour #6 - The Finger Lakes Scenic Railway Experience

Wednesday, July 23 7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.

\$85 per person

Discover central New York and the history of the railroad there with this full-day excursion that takes you on the Finger Lakes Scenic Railway from Geneva to Canandaigua – with a lunch layover in Shortsville! Ride in vintage NYC gray smooth-side passenger cars pulled by “lightning stripe” engines.



Your guides will share the Erie Canal Heritage Corridor with you on the two-hour ride to your boarding Station in Geneva. Interpreters will share more about the history and developments of the railroad in this region.

Featured on this tour is the story – told by costumed historic presenters – of the baseball league that became a regional fixture featuring teams from every rail yard in Central New York! Great rails, great history, and great fun as you enjoy central New York’s Finger Lakes region.

## Tour #7 - Niagara Falls Supernatural Wonders

Thursday, July 24 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

\$75 per person

A tour of Niagara Falls like no other – experience the raging rapids at Three Sisters Islands, part of Goat Island State Park, which also features Terrapin Point, Luna Island and all of the favored vantage points to view and experience



the Falls. Tour includes admission to Cave of the Winds – a walkway at the base of the American Falls, and the world-famous Maid of the Mist Boat Ride, with admission to the Observation Tower.

Enjoy a delicious picnic lunch at Whirlpool State Park, along with the opportunity to view the Whirlpool.

Your tour also includes the New York State Power Authority’s Power Vista – a complete hands-on experience for the whole family. Learn more about hydroelectric power generation while viewing the two massive power generation facilities at Niagara.

A special addition for the LCCA is a presentation on the Great Gorge Railroad, which ran from the late 1800s to 1935 by New York Parks interpretive staff, complete with visuals.

## Tour #8 - Buffalo Harbor Cruise

Thursday, July 24 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

\$85 per person

Our day begins with a visit to the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens. We’ll stroll through the



most intact Frederick Law Olmstead (designer of New York City’s Central Park) landscape and arboretum in the country. The Victorian tri-dome glass conservatory is home to exotic horticulture treasures from different climates.

Next, we’ll board the Miss Buffalo Cruise Boat. This tour is unique as it travels on three different bodies of water – the Buffalo River, Lake Erie, and the Niagara River – and through a lock; all on an international boundary line. Pass under the Peace Bridge and the International Railroad Bridge and then continue to Strawberry Island. You’ll see fabulous sites and hear about the history and unique facts of the greater Buffalo/Niagara region. A delicious luncheon at a waterfront restaurant compliments this tour.

*Tour package includes:*  
luxury motorcoach transportation,

admission to the Botanical Gardens, luncheon at Shanghai Red’s Waterfront Restaurant, Miss Buffalo narrated scenic harbor cruise, meal gratuity and standard taxes.



**Tour #9 - Buffalo's Best**  
 Friday, July 25 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
 \$80 per person



Discover Buffalo – historic, eccentric, entertaining, scenic, and exciting. You'll be surprised at the hidden gems and world-class, must-see highlights that will create memories of a lifetime. Our step-on guide will escort your group to internationally acclaimed art and architecture and through Buffalo's Central Terminal, Forest Lawn Cemetery, and Millionaires Row – a living museum of Gilded Age grandeur featuring homes of astonishing size and splendor. And there's more!

Visit the Buffalo Transportation Pierce-Arrow Museum featuring automobiles made in western New York including Pierce-Arrow and Thomas Flyer. The Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park is



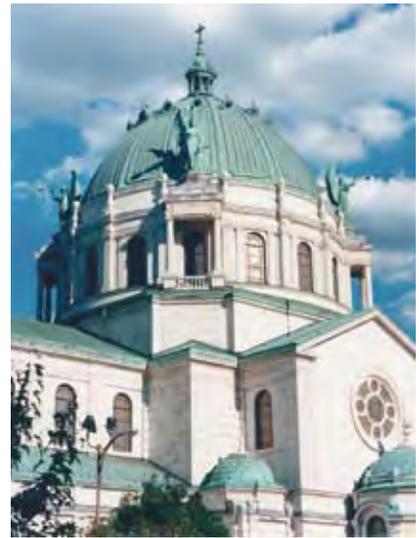
a one-of-its-kind attraction in the nation. All branches of the Armed forces are represented in the park's exhibits. A visit to Buffalo isn't complete without a lunch stop at the Anchor Bar – home of the original chicken wing – for a "taste" of Buffalo's best.

**Tour #10 - Buffalo's Religious Architecture**  
 Friday, July 25 8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
 \$48 per person

Visit Our Lady of Victory Basilica, First Presbyterian Church, Temple Beth Zion, and Trinity Episcopal Churches. "Lord, I love the beauty of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells" (Psalm 26 2:8). How better to describe

this architectural journey to Buffalo's houses of worship. We'll experience the magnificence of Buffalo's religious architecture with a visit to these four fabulous sites.

Following your tour, lunch will be at The Pearl Street Grill which is quickly becoming "downtown's most fun and exciting restaurant."



**Tour #11 - Ladies Day Out at Galleria Mall Shopping & Lunch**  
 Saturday, July 26 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
 \$30 per person

The Walden Galleria Mall, the area's largest enclosed shopping mall, is located in the Buffalo suburb of Cheektowaga. Walden Galleria comprises 1,600,000 square feet of retail space, with more than 150 stores on two levels.



After a day of shopping, relax and enjoy a unique lunch experience at the Melting Pot Restaurant, where fondue truly becomes a memorable four-course dining experience. Patrons can dip into something different – and discover all the ingredients for a unique dining experience.

Transportation for Saturday's shopping is via White School Bus, an air-conditioned bus with cushioned seats. No lavatory. 

*Tour photographs provided by Buffalo Niagara CVB (Chuck LaChiusa & Mark Parsons) and tour sites.*

**Answers to "A Lionel Puzzlement"**

1. M, v, d; 2. C, viii, a; 3. B, xiv, e; 4. D, xi, d; 5. K, xii, d; 6. A, ix, d; 7. F, vii, d; 8. N, iii, b; 9. E, x, d; 10. O, xiii, d; 11. H, i, c; 12. L, vi, c; 13. G, iv, a; 14. I, ii, d; 15. J, xv, d.

**LCCA 2008 Convention Schedule**  
**Buffalo – Niagara, NY July 20-26, 2008**

<b>Sunday, July 20</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Registration Desk open	Noon – 7 p.m.	
Board of Directors Meeting	2 – 9 p.m.	Adam’s Mark Hotel
<b>Monday, July 21</b>		
Registration Desk open	7 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #1: Niagara History on the Rails	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	BBQ Lunch
<b>Tuesday, July 22</b>		
Registration Desk open	7 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #2: Trains in Erie, PA	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Lunch at Union Station
Tour #3: On the Erie Canal	9 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Lunch at Lockport Locks
Tour #4: Casino Night	1 – 9 p.m.	Fallsview Casino Resort, buffet dinner included
<b>Wednesday, July 23</b>		
Registration Desk open	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #5: Niagara Falls Experience	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	USA & Canada, lunch
Tour #6: Finger Lakes Scenic Railway	7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Lunch in Shortsville
<b>Thursday, July 24</b>		
Registration Desk open	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Tour #7: Niagara Falls Supernatural	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Picnic Lunch at Park
Tour #8: Buffalo Harbor Cruise	9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Lunch at Waterfront
Get Acquainted Party	6 – 9:30 p.m.	Adam’s Mark Hotel
<b>Friday, July 25</b>		
Registration Desk open	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	
Trading Hall	7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Set-up for Exhibitors only
Tour #9: Buffalo’s Best	8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch at Anchor Bar
Tour #10: Buffalo Churches Architecture	8 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch at Pearl Street Grill
LCCA Business Meeting	2 – 3 p.m.	Adam’s Mark Hotel
Lionel Seminar	3 – 5 p.m.	Adam’s Mark Hotel
Trading Hall open	6 – 9 p.m.	For Convention Registrants
<b>Saturday, July 26</b>		
Registration Desk open	8 a.m. – Noon	
Trading Hall open	8 – 9 a.m.	For Members only
Trading Hall open	9 a.m. – 3 p.m.	For Members & Public
Tour #11: Mall Shopping & Lunch	9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Walden Galleria Mall
LCCA Reception	6 – 7 p.m.	Adam’s Mark Hotel
LCCA Banquet	7 – 10:30 p.m.	Adam’s Mark Hotel
Convention Ends	after the Banquet	
<b>Sunday, July 27</b>		
Trading Hall take-down	9 a.m. – Noon	For Exhibitors only

Safe Travel Home! See you in Sacramento – July 2009

# A COLOSSAL COLLECTION

by C.D. & Betty Robinson RM 21139

Like most boys of my generation, I received a train when I was a kid, and I've never abandoned the hobby. My first one was a Lionel® #671 train set in 1947. I've always had that train around some place. The next one was a Union Pacific #2023 silver and gray train set in 1951. A little bit later, I went into HO-gauge trains. My brothers Robert and Albert also played with the trains, and we still share a common interest and the fun.

I've always had a train platform. Even after I was first married, the trains were around. About 1989 I got deeply involved with the hobby as a collector. Now the basement of our home is filled with trains – wall to wall, floor to ceiling.

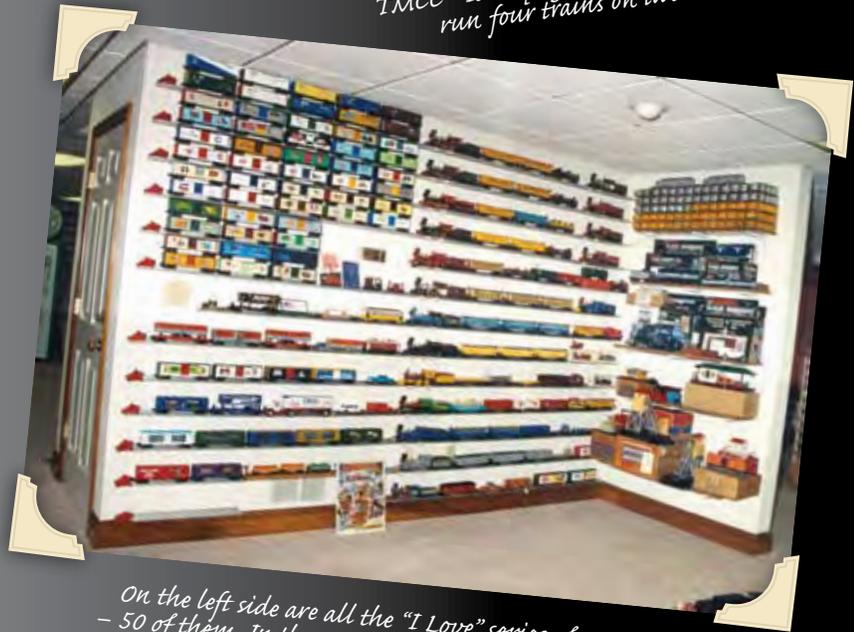
Thankfully, I have a very cooperative wife. Betty enjoys going with me to train shows and auctions. She's my "right hand." She buys trains too; I have to stop her from buying sometimes. We attend train shows and LCCA Conventions together; she knows as much about the trains as I do.

## THE TRAIN ROOM

When I designed and built our house in 1998-99, I invested a lot of attention in the train room. It is a 30x75-foot area with a clear span – no support columns – that encloses about 2,250 square feet. The stairwell in the center of the room separates the space into two areas with trains displayed on extruded aluminum track-like shelving. There are 11 rows of display shelves, floor to ceiling.



Betty and I enjoy running the 6x12-foot floor layout for visitors and grandkids. It's built with Lionel FastTrack™ and has TMCC™. It keeps growing, and I'm able to run four trains on two levels.



On the left side are all the "I Love" series of state cars – 50 of them. In the center area are all the General locos from the first ones in the 50s and onwards, including the Gifts Galore original "Halloween" General train set, but I don't have its display box. In the upper right hand corner are 72 Alco V1P body shells.



Everything on this wall display is Lionel F3s; both postwar and some newer ones. I have a Union Pacific from when I was a kid because it cost only \$50 then. I really like the Santa Fe #2343; it was a \$75 item in 1948, but my dad couldn't afford it. I've bought all of the Santa Fe F3s for display on this wall.



*These are prewar O-gauge trains with passenger cars. Some are three-car sets and a few are four-car sets. The Flying Yankee is displayed here, and on the top shelves of this cabinet are the #763E in black and #763E in gray.*



*This is the layout I started out with, and it grew and grew to 8x12 feet. It now has three levels with multiple trains running on each level - 11 trains simultaneously. The track pathway is just an oval; nothing exotic.*

## ADVICE FOR BUILDING A TRAIN ROOM

Hobbyists who want to dedicate an area of their house to trains should plan the project carefully upfront. I'm a designer, and that work life experience illuminated our new home project. Here are some points to consider. Install high-density wallboard on the studs, then install drywall sheets over them. The wallboard will provide a secure anchor for mounting screw-on aluminum shelving units on the walls without regard for the location of studs for support.

Install electrical outlets in the floor; this will avoid dragging extension cords from wall outlets to the layout. As for lighting, use fluorescents for general light and install recessed "wall washer" lights in the ceiling to illuminate the display areas. Don't overcrowd the room; I have a lot of stuff in my train room, but there's still space to walk around in here.

Pay attention to the HVAC system and air filtering for dust control; the big idea is to enjoy the trains, not dust them. I recommend HEPA filters. In most home systems, the return air flow is through cavities in the wall, so you're likely to pick up and re-circulate drywall dust forever; make them the same as the incoming air ducts. No flexible insulated ducts.



*The first cabinet to the right contains several Lionel non-train products: a slide projector, chemistry sets, and other toys. I also have Marx® toys and American Flyer® products - a cash register, a typewriter, a Gilbert puzzle set.*



*This display is for my LCCA items, the "Halloween" General set re-make, club Convention cars, and Convention-related items. - registration gifts, on-site cars, and banquet cars. I have most of the LCCA Convention cars, but not all of them.*



This display area includes the Lionel Girl's Train; the Anniversary Train of 1950 is right above it. Below them are a Trainmaster set and the #671 Electronic set.



These items are from the LCCA 2005 Convention in St. Louis: the table decoration with the Arch, the on-site car (a green stock car), the banquet car (a pink stock car), and the Convention car (a flat car with two speeders on board). Products from other LCCA Conventions are also displayed here.



The UP train was a silent auction item during the banquet of the LCCA 2006 Convention in Denver. The boxes and trains were hand-signed by the UP Steam Crew of "The LCCA Special" excursion train. We placed the LCCA 2006 Convention car (a UP Auxiliary Power Car) in the consist.



In the foreground are sets of pre-war O-gauge trains along with some Standard Gauge trains at the bottom. I have a good collection of art by Angela Trotta Thomas. The one at the top came with Lionel's TMCC™, and it's signed by Neil Young and Richard Kughn.



The pedal car in the background is a Lionel item made in China. I bought it at York out of a van in the parking lot and hauled it home in the back of my suburban. I've never seen another one like it.



The bathroom includes a train display too - Santa Fe trains, towels with the SF logo, and a SF calendar on the wall. There's no doubt about my railroad loyalty.

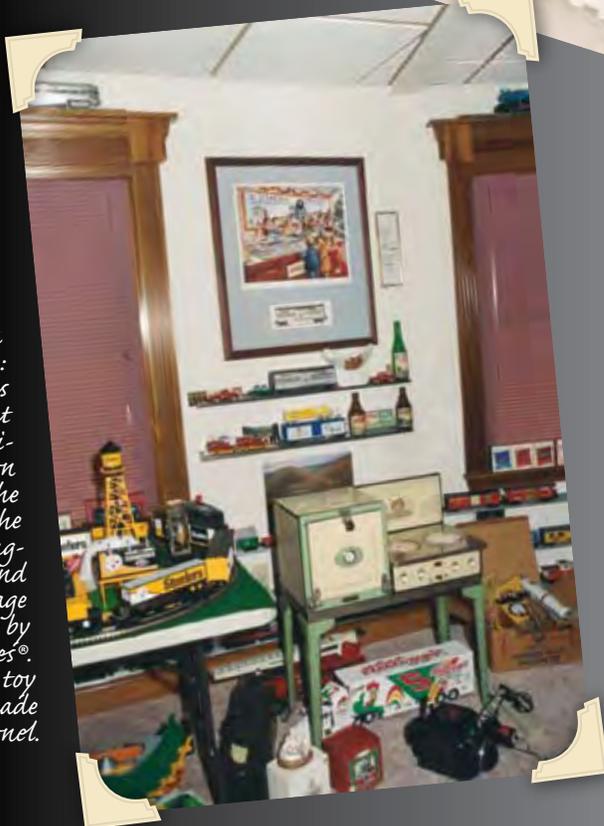


To the left are Lionel steam locos in the late '90s — the Big Boy, the Challenger, and the Allegheny — the big steamers of that time. The blue Pennsy T-1 loco is from a limited number created by Richard Kughn — five white and five blue ones. I bought a blue one at his auction, and he hand-signed and dated it. The panel of 82 porthole cabooses includes a few repaints. To the right is a display of Lionel boxcars from the famed #6464 series; I have them all from the lowest to the highest numbers. I am missing a few of the rare variations, but I am looking.

This view of the multi-level layout shows its stair-step design. When we moved into this house, we placed this layout in the middle of the room as a focal point of attention. To the left are the Lionel Century Club trains in custom-made display cases.



Here are club-sponsored products from the 1998 Philadelphia Convention: a Thomas art print from the silent auction during the banquet, the Amtrak baggage car, and some baggage items made by Pride Lines®. The 1930 toy stove was made by Lionel.



## STILL COLLECTING

I am still actively collecting, and I haven't sold anything. I buy less nowadays because I already have most of the things on my wish list. When I attended a WGHOT show at Pittsburgh two years ago, I saw that the attendance was incredible — tens of thousands of visitors, mostly families with youngsters and even infants in baby strollers. When I see that level of turnout, I know that this hobby is not dying out. 



Photographs by Buffington Studio

# Lionel News & Views

by Bill Schmeelk  
RM 6643

Oops!

Last issue a curmudgeon crept in and we need to correct a couple of errors. First, I wanted to thank Don Johnson, a frequent contributor to the FasTrack™ Yahoo group, for his inspiration with regard to cutting FasTrack. Second, if you were interested in more information on the Black Diamond Railway DVD we reviewed last issue; the correct web address is [www.toytrainsontracks.com](http://www.toytrainsontracks.com). At this site you can view a preview of the DVD and place an order. Sorry for the confusion.

## Lionel Takes off into Space

In 1959, among several space age offerings, Lionel® introduced the #3419 Operating Helicopter Launching Car. I received my first train set for Christmas in 1958. The year after, I received several additions to my basic, figure-eight layout. Although I did not specifically ask for it, one of my new additions was the Helicopter Car. **Photo 1** shows the earliest model. Actually on the very earliest model, all of the metal parts of the launching mechanism were black. The 1959 catalog pictured the car with a red body, but to my knowledge it was always made in shades of blue and once in olive drab. This initial version of the Helicopter Car had a large winding spool, almost as wide as the flat car and both the reset lever and the manual release lever were located on the top of the car. The car could also be operated remotely with the remote control track. The helicopter on the 1959 version of the car had a dual blade propeller which folded to appear as shown in photo 1. Before launching, the blades would have to be swiveled open as shown in **photo 2**. Now you had a car that was seven inches wide, and wouldn't fit through many tunnels; certainly not into any mountain that used Lionel's #920 Tunnel Portals.

I remember playing with this car the day after Christmas. I also remember my disappointment when I noticed that the trucks and couplers differed significantly from those on the outfit I received the year before. This was

the first car I had seen with plastic trucks and couplers. After several successful launches that first morning, the teeth on the spool which engaged with the bottom of the helicopter's propeller shaft broke off during a launch. This rendered the launching mechanism inoperable. I don't remember how, but my dad got a replacement spool. If you are looking for one of these original cars with the large spool for your collection, always check the teeth on the spool. I have seen many in which one or more teeth were broken. This was apparently



a common problem. When Lionel redesigned the spool for 1960, they used a more durable plastic for this part.

Although the catalog number 3419 remained, the Helicopter Car went through a significant redesign for 1960. **Photo 3** shows the 1960 version of the car. The catalog continued to show the car in red and with both the large spool and the redesigned smaller spool. Four significant changes were made to the production of the car.



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First, the winding spool was reduced from two inches to just over 1-3/8 inches in diameter and molded from a more durable plastic. This eliminated the problem with broken teeth.

Second, there was now a single, redesigned helicopter blade. In addition to reducing manufacturing costs, this also eliminated the operational problem of the wide blades and the necessity to unfold the blades before launch. The single blade could be aligned with the length of the car, and it was always ready for launching.

Third, the manual launch lever was moved from the top to the side of the car. Although some have suggested that this was done to eliminate the need for one of the slots in the top of the flat car, I would suggest that, more importantly, it allowed a manual release without putting your fingers directly under the helicopter blade. The blade of course begins its rapid spin while your fingers are still in this location. The side location was safer and made more sense.

Fourth, as seen in **photo 4**, the cradle supporting the tail end of the helicopter was increased in size and turned 180 degrees in a position reversed from the original version. The reversed position along with the extended height held the copter in place more securely.

A fifth but less significant change was the finish on the metal. The first year, the launcher parts were blackened. In 1960 and later versions, the metal was silver in color. I'm not sure what this finish was, but over time it can oxidize and leave a yellowish powder coating.

### Copter Factoids

In 1960, Lionel also introduced an Operating Helicopter Car in its HO line, seen in **photo 5**. The HO version used a smaller helicopter and a trackside activator which would launch the copter when the car passed the activator in a reverse direction.

1960 was also the year that Lionel featured the Helicopter Car in its television advertising. In the commercial, the copter lifts up off the car, heads straight up and then flies horizontally over the layout. In actual practice, when the helicopter was launched, it flew straight up and both the blade and the body revolved. If you look carefully at the commercial, you can see threads or wires guiding the copter in its horizontal flight. Ah, the magic of television!

By 1961, this car finally appeared in the catalog with its correct colors and spool. In 1962, a new, cheaper helicopter appeared. This was the yellow helicopter used with the #419 Heliport. This copter had the tail and body molded in one piece and had no markings



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on it. The Helicopter Car remained in the catalog through 1965, but in 1964 and 1965 it did not appear in any of the cataloged sets. The black and white illustration in these two catalogs was the large spool version with a copter blade that was never used on the operating copters. The HO version last appeared in the 1966 catalog.

### They Really Do Exist

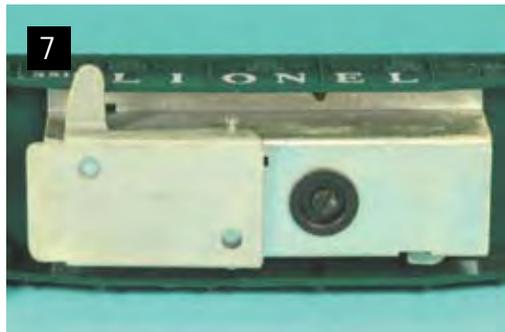
Prototypes for many of Lionel's unique cars can be found in the real world. For example, there were plans for rail cars for use in placing radioactive waste into storage. There actually was a missile-firing boxcar, a flatcar that carried a submarine, and an aquarium car. Boxcars were built for transporting explosives (though probably without bulls-eye markings on the outside), and flatcars were used to transport helicopters.



6

1964 while the HO version was last cataloged in 1966.

Both the Satellite Car and the Helicopter Car were featured in many of Lionel's promotional sets. The versions offered in these promotional sets were often cheapened to the point where they could only be operated manually and some even had two fixed non-operating couplers. These



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In 1961 Lionel introduced a car that I doubt we'll ever find a prototype for – the #3519 Operating

are well documented in John Schmid's excellent resource, Authoritative Guide to Lionel's Promotional Outfits 1960 – 1969. According to John's book, the rare #3510 Satellite Car was included in ten promotional sets from 1962 – 1965. This car, shown in **photo 9**, was a red flatcar, and the number is not printed on it. The car was equipped with arch bar, fixed-coupler trucks. It seems odd to have Civil War era trucks on a car carting a space probe. This car did not have a box. **Photo 10** shows the underside of the car with its bare-bones launcher. This launcher does not have a lever on top of the car; instead, there was a single lever on the side. In the UP position, the spool could be wound; when manually

Satellite Launching Car. The catalog pictured the car with both a red and a blue flatcar, but it was introduced with a dark green flatcar as seen in **photo 6**. The Satellite illustrated in the catalog also differed from the actual production model. In the 1962 catalog it was shown with both a blue and a green flatcar and with a more accurate illustration of the satellite.

### Similarities and Differences

The Satellite Car used a launcher very similar to that used in the Helicopter Car; however, the spool was modified for the satellite. **Photo 7** shows a bottom view of the launcher with the silver-color metal and the manual release on the side. Although the Satellite Car was certainly not prototypical, it was a good operator. The satellite was symmetrical and unlike the helicopter, had no moving parts. When launched, the entire piece revolved, and it looked "realistic." The wide wings provided excellent lift for the spinning satellite.

Lionel introduced an HO version of this car the same year that the O-gauge version was released; it's shown in **photo 8**. Unlike the HO Helicopter Car, this car used the same satellite and radar dish parts as were used on the O-gauge model. I'm guessing that the O-gauge model was designed with this in mind. The HO Satellite Car used the same flatcar as the HO Helicopter Car — only the spool height was different. The O-gauge car was last cataloged in



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pressed DOWN, the satellite could be launched skyward. Lionel also used this launcher on a green version numbered 3509.



10

## Reissued but Different

Last year in Lionel's Postwar Celebration Series, the Satellite Car returned after an absence of 43 years. Lionel did not exactly duplicate its original Satellite Car. They chose to model the rare red #3510 version. Thankfully, they equipped it with all the top features, some never before seen on a Satellite Car, including: die-cast sprung trucks, metal operating couplers, and the remote control launcher.



**Photo 11** shows the new car. The most obvious difference is that the graphics on the satellite wings are missing. This was not done intentionally and Lionel has taken steps to correct it. A call to Lionel's customer service will get you a pair of Mylar decals. These can be easily applied to enhance the effect. The finished satellite can be seen on the car in **photo 13**.

**Photo 12** shows a bottom view of this car. The launcher is chrome plated – a finish that will not oxidize and will be extremely durable. The plating is not light silver; rather, it has dark chrome plating. This is the same as was used on the Postwar Celebration Series version of the Helicopter Car. The flatcar on the original #3510 was molded in red plastic and unpainted. The new version features a painted red flatcar.

## Satellites Aren't compatible with Helicopters

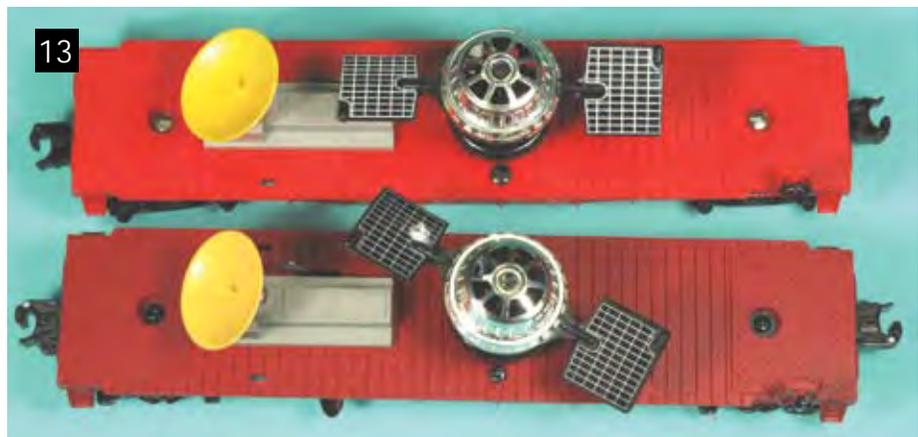
The original Satellite Car came out when I was 11 years old. I already had the Helicopter Car, and I figured that if I purchased the satellite, I could use my helicopter launcher to fly it. I bought the satellite from a service station and was sadly disappointed to find that it would not work on the Helicopter car. The postwar car had a winding spool made specifically for the satellite. It was taller than the helicopter

spool and had a smaller hole in the center. Lionel's Helicopter Car had a spool with three teeth on it to engage in a matching piece on the shaft of the blade spindle. The Satellite Car had a four-tooth spool which also was taller. The extra height was needed because the engaging teeth on the satellite were located up inside near its center.

The new car has a satellite that has been modified to use the helicopter spool. The teeth in the satellite have been positioned nearer the bottom of the satellite and there are now three teeth to match the helicopter spool. While this allows the same spool to be used, it also means that the new satellite will not work with a postwar Satellite Car and vice-versa. The new satellite is not as stable on the car as it should be. This is due to the fact that the hole in the helicopter spool is far too large for the satellite. The extra play allows the satellite to wobble.

## Changes We'd Like to See

As a postwar train fan, I'm pleased to see the Satellite Car return – especially with improvements such as die-cast trucks, a painted flatcar, and a chrome-plated launch mechanism. Although the car works as produced, we'd like to see some changes the next time it is offered. First, we'd like to see the fit between the satellite spindle and the center hole of the spool improved. This can be done by enlarging the satellite spindle or making a spool specifically for the



satellite with a smaller center hole. This would eliminate the wobble of the satellite as it rests on the spool.

We'd also like to see the teeth on the satellite positioned so that when the satellite is on the car and the teeth engaged, the satellite wings can be aligned with the length of the flat car. As it is now, the satellite sits with its wings extending beyond the sides of the car. **Photo 13** is a top view of the original and the new car. The top car is the postwar #3510. Ideally, the satellite should be able to be positioned like the top one. 

*Photographs by Bill Schmeelk*

Email Bill at: [bill@wellingtonent.com](mailto:bill@wellingtonent.com)

# The Tinsplate Cannoball

by Ken Morgan  
RM 12231

## Budget Classics – Part 2

I took an issue off for the holidays, so I'll pick up where we left off in October 2007 with more info about budget locos in Lionel's classic era standard gauge line. But first, as usual, let's play a round of "TPC Jeopardy" – where did Ralph keep threatening to send Alice?

OK, back to trains. In addition to the #8 covered in that previous issue, I would list two other standard gauge classic era electric motors as "Budget Classics," meaning they won't create a large "hit" in your checkbook. They would be the #10 and the #318. For other than rare colors or department store specials, they are both available for under \$250 in reasonably nice condition; often under \$200. You can't even buy a new repro for that!

### Start with the #10

Like nearly all standard gauge locos made by all manufacturers – except for the top of the line stuff – the #10 motor is a 0-4-0. Like its bigger brothers, the #380 and #381, it is based on The Milwaukee Road's big bi-polar electrics. So are many other locos by American Flyer®, Ives®, Dorfan®, etc. In fact, the Ives #3245 and the Lionel® #381 bi-polars were arguably the fanciest, certainly the biggest, standard gauge locos they produced. Given that only five of the 12-inches-to-the-foot versions were built, they generated a lot of attention from toy train manufacturers! I assume the rounded contours were both more aesthetically pleasing and easier to shape than the basic box cabs which were much more numerous on real railroads.

But I digress. The #10E shown in **photo 1** was my first standard gauge loco. Once presumed to be my only one, it has proven the maxim of the potato chip maker, "You can't have just one." I actually was looking for a #380 because it's bigger and not that much more expensive, but got a great deal on the #10 with two cars, tracks, and a couple of accessories. Besides, I added the #380 later, but that's another story.

For a loco that was only in the catalog for six years, it must have sold like crazy, since there seem to be even more of them around than the less expensive #8. The #10 was catalogued from 1925 through 1929, the #10E from 1926 to 1930. Both were available in gray and peacock, plus mohave for the #10. All have black frames and are about the same price today. The #10/10E, like many low-end models, was also produced for department stores. Those items are now out of the budget classics price range, but they were attractively painted red, peacock with a dark green frame, and in state brown (light brown, not tan). There may also have been an olive green version, but that would be very rare and thus very pricey. And because the basic locos are cheap and easily available, my advice is, be very astute when buying rare versions.

The trim on budget classics is basic – a single small pantograph, one whistle, two headlights. Early locos had strap headlights, later ones had the cast version shown here. These had lots of brass trim – doors, windows, and number plates. They are made from one brass plate and inserted in place from the inside. This type of construction was a big part of Lionel's success. The trim was eye-catching, but not labor-intensive compared to the cost of shaping the material and putting each piece individually in its place.

And always, when considering a standard gauge loco, check the wheels. Original ones are often warped and/or too chipped for smooth operation. Repro wheels are readily available, and I have installed them on many of my locos



because I run them; not just display them. If you have never replaced standard gauge wheels, I suggest that you look for a loco on which this job has already been done.

### The Passenger Train

The #10E was a step up from the #8. The #8 typically had only two passenger cars (coach and observation), but the #10 was catalogued with three. It added a baggage car, and included two more pieces of straight track. In 1926, a #10 with a #332 baggage car, #339 Pullman (coach) and #341 observation car cost \$25. The same set with an E-unit was \$29.75. For reference, the respective #8/8E sets were \$20 and \$24.50. The coach and observation cars for the two sets were different. The #8 sets have #337/338 cars which have 10 individual windows. The #10 sets have the aforementioned #339/341 cars with six pairs of double windows. They were the same size, but sold individually. The double window cars were generally 25 and 45 cents more than the others.

### The Freight Train

The #10 apparently didn't come with a catalogued freight set in 1926, but in 1927 it was shown with a five-car set as opposed to the #8 with three. Both had a gondola, lumber (flat) car, and caboose. The #10 also had a cattle car and a "box" car. All were 500 series cars. It also included two additional straight track sections. The prices were \$20/\$25.50 for the #8/8E and \$25/\$30.75 for the #10/10E. As I said last installment, I am not even going to try to figure out why the E-unit had a different cost in different sets.

An aside about the freight cars – the #514 "box" car listed in the 1927 catalog was actually a #514 "refrigerator" car; it's one of the rarer cars in the 500 series. The "box" car, also numbered #514, didn't appear until 1929 at which time the reefer was renumbered to #514R. The #514 reefer will set you back more than any of the three budget classic locos. The #514R is roughly 40% the cost of a car without the R suffix.

By 1930, only the E versions were available for the #10, and the consists of the sets remained the same. Both the passenger and freight sets were \$30. Not much inflation!



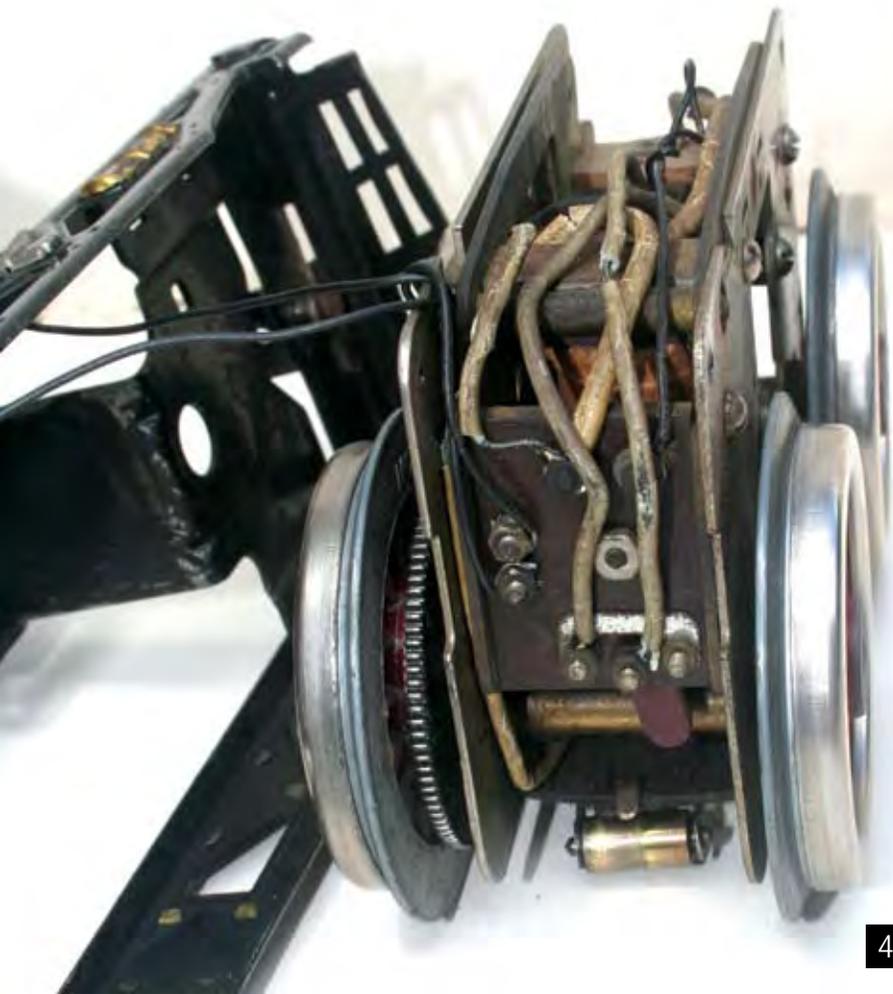
### Brass Trim Details

Back to the pictures. Check **photo 2**. Both front and back look the same with more brass in the door, handrails, and flag stanchions. And **photo 3** shows the brass plate with the doors, windows, etc, from the inside and the outside. Look closely and you'll see the outline of the sections where the "Lionel" and "10E" are. They are clearly pressed into the brass plate so they will be flush with the body of the loco when viewed from the outside. Also clearly visible are two of the triangular tabs used to hold this plate in place.

A few comments on them. First, as noted above, it was much cheaper to put one brass sheet in place and get two windows, one door, and two nameplates than to do them each individually.

Second, if you ever restore one of these pieces, the tabs must be **VERY** carefully bent upward to get the brass sheet out. Applying a little heat often helps with the process. Then after repainting the body and replacing the brass, bend them down carefully. Heat won't likely help here, since it will affect the paint. My advice is, don't try to bend them a second time. You will most likely break them off. Ask me how I know this if you see me in person someday!





Third, this is one good place to check for restorations. Lionel perfected the art of bending the tabs without marring the paint, but most restorers haven't. Typically the tab shows signs of chipped paint or scratches from the tool used to bend them down after restoration.

### E-Unit Details

My #10E was not only my first standard gauge loco, but it was also my first look at why Lionel was so eager to buy out Ives at that company's bankruptcy. **Photos 4 and 5** show Lionel's early attempt at a remote control reverse mechanism. For those of you who are familiar with the drum e-unit which lasted well into the modern era and thought it was a bear to work on, try this one!

At least the parts make sense and the circuitry is easy to follow. Not to mention that spare parts, complete e-units, and good wiring diagrams are easy to find. Not so, to the best of my knowledge, for this beast. This is a pendulum e-unit. In **photo 4** it is seen from the front. Behind the fiber plate with the screws is the pendulum. The tab sticking out at the bottom shifts left/right as current is interrupted. It moves a stiff wire which drags contacts from left to right reversing the flow of current to the motor, just like the drum e-unit. There are, however, several differences. It's a two-position e-unit with no neutral position; just forward and reverse. So if the train is moving along at a reasonably good clip and it reverses,

no good things happen – the cars previously following the loco suddenly are preceding the loco. All these trains have bayonet-like “automatic” couplers which are really shaky when the train is operated in reverse, which will be obvious as soon as this occurs.

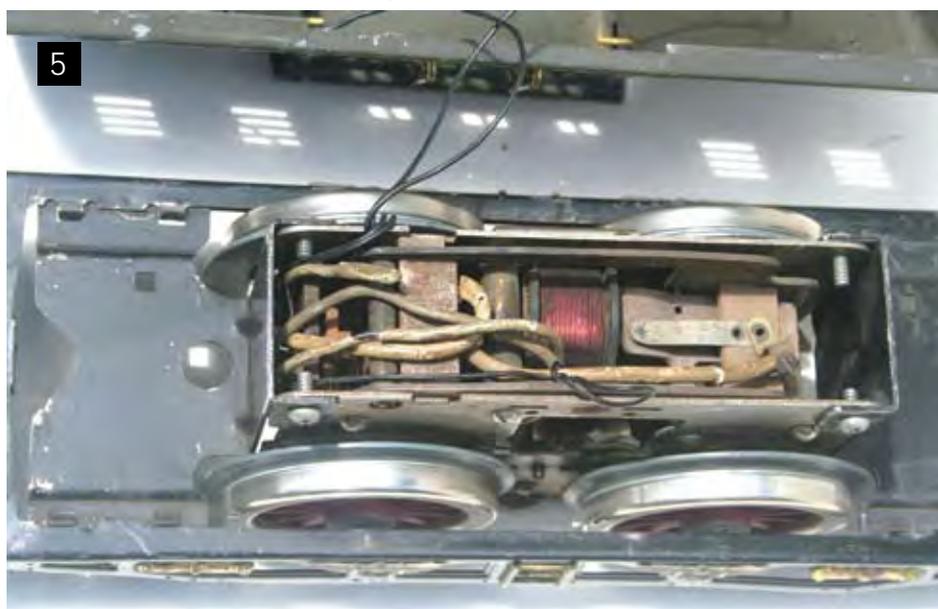
Another difference is shown in **photo 5**. The flapper at the far right – the somewhat corroded metal plate under the fiber board and running parallel to the frame – moves up and down slightly. It doesn't move when current is flowing. It makes contact with the smaller contact lever above it that holds the e-unit; at least, most of the time. What I found is that any interruption in current, even a dirty piece of track or a bounce along the less than perfectly smooth right-of-way, tends to make the loco suddenly slam into reverse with often interesting but not necessarily desirable results nor printable expletives. The “0-5-0 switcher” (my hand) gets the consist back on the rails.

The current required to throw the e-unit fully to the left or right and get the loco going forward again (in case nothing derailed) is considerable – more than 20 VAC and close to 25. Which means a ZW won't do it because it tops out at 20 VAC. So I use my trusty, albeit ancient, Z transformer – which produces close to 25 volts – to operate my standard gauge loop.

No matter how fast I turn the power knob to zero and back to 25, it doesn't faze the pendulum. So I put a knife switch in line to provide a hefty 25-volt jolt. That worked.

### Pay Attention to Polarity

That leads me to an interesting but humbling story. Long ago I learned to be careful about polarity and made sure common was common and hot was hot on all loops and circuits including those to the operating accessories. But I missed something when I installed that knife switch.



One day while running trains, I opened the switch to reverse a loco. It didn't stop. I was looking at a 3/4-inch gap in a 25-volt circuit. There was no spark jumping the gap, and the train is still going. Couldn't be, but it was. So I looked closely at the tracks and wiring. Was there a wire somewhere making contact? Nah. Poltergeists? Nah.

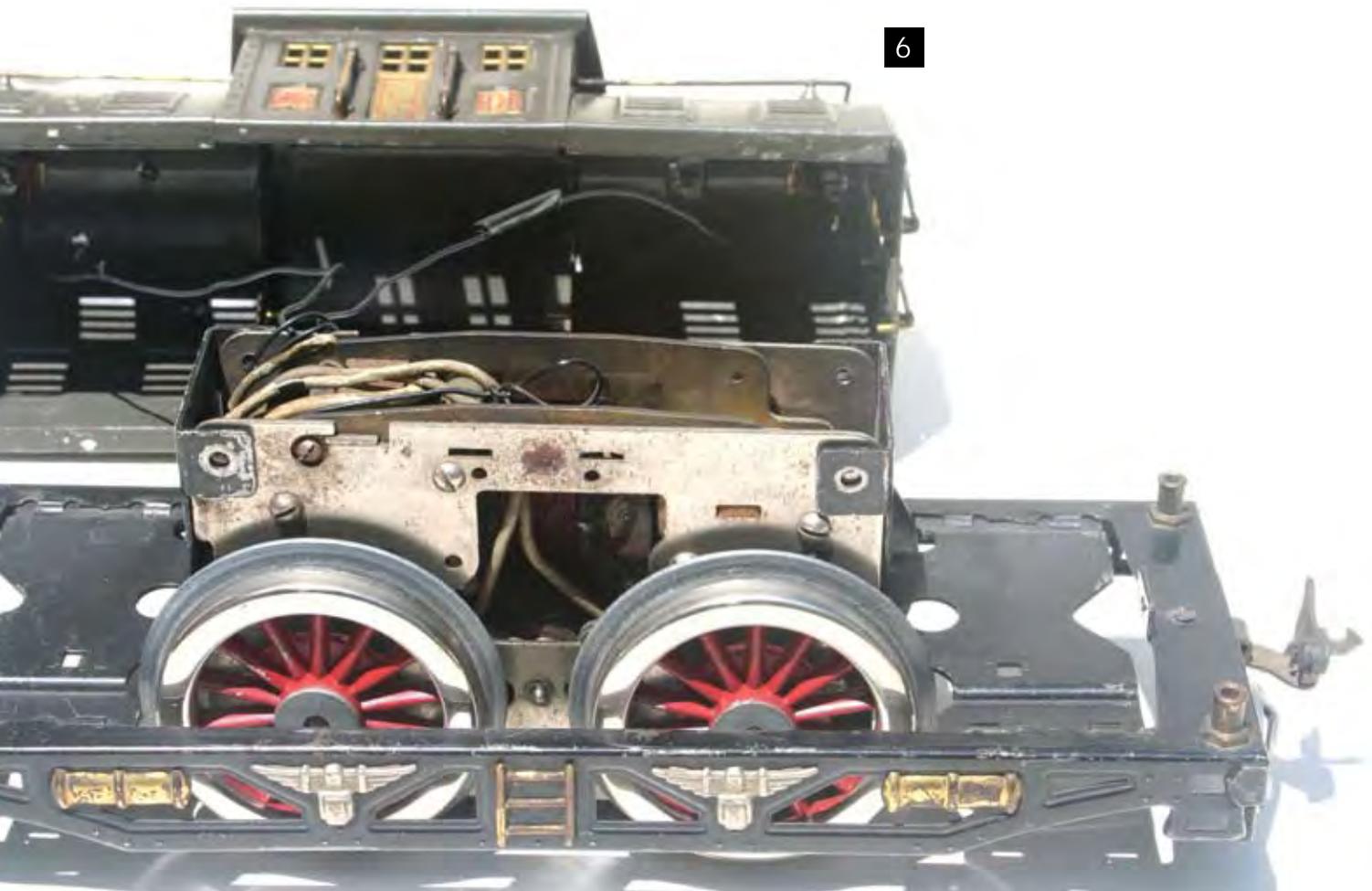
Finally, I noticed that the metal base of a train station was touching a grounded cross-tie of the track. I had put the knife switch in the common feed, not the hot feed. That would have been OK except that now common was still completing the circuit through the station platform and the cross-tie. So I reinstalled the knife switch on the hot side. Many of my friends have enjoyed the experience at my expense. But that's why trains are fun. There's always something new to learn, and lots of the lessons are much funnier after they're learned and shared. Very humbling, these "simple old toys." So much for what I should have learned in train hobby school.

Let's look at one more photo. Photo 4 shows the frame separate from the motor and body. Photo 5 shows it in place with the hold-down screws; some of which are replacements. **Photo 6** shows the frame in place but without the screws, which are short, round head, straight slot machine screws. The body comes off with the usual single screw at each end. The frame has four screws, one in each corner, to hold the motor in place. You can see the holes for two of them at the top of the frame at the ends in this picture. They usually

line up easily, but occasionally I have found a very slightly bent frame which doesn't prevent the loco from running, but does make screw alignment more difficult. Quick tip: don't fully tighten any of them until they are all started in their respective threads. Actually, that's a good rule to follow generally. One more thing you may notice in photos 5 and 6. That ratty old whitish insulation is the original stuff. And given the gaps in it, is a candidate for replacement or reconditioning. I have recently had some interesting conversations with a long-time member who has the same solution to this as I have used. That and some other things we chatted about are fodder for further installments of *The Tinplate Cannonball*.

OK, enough for this installment. Here's the eagerly awaited answer to "Final Jeopardy" (cue the "bing, bong, bong" notes!). "To the moon, Alice, to the moon!" And, no, Ralph Kramden never dared do it. Maybe it was the look on her face daring him! Or maybe his bus route didn't reach there. Which reminds me of a great cartoon I saw some time ago. Two astronauts are standing on the moon with a woman's body lying in front of them and one says, "My God, it's Alice Kramden!" So much for my slightly warped sense of humor. See you next time along the tracks of *The Tinplate Cannonball!* 🚂

*Photographs by Ken Morgan*



# A Lionel Puzzlement

by Gene H. Russell, Ed.D.  
RM 24608

## Boxcar Biography

Names of famous individuals have been stamped on Lionel Pullman, passenger cars, boxcars, and reefers for more than 50 years. Some cars even show a picture of the person. In this puzzlement, select an item from each clue category (“Easy,” “Medium,” and “Difficult”) to make a match with the famous person in the left-hand column. Enjoy! 

Person	E	M	D	Easy
1. Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922)	—	—	—	A. American Flyer trains B. “Betsy Ross” C. “I Walk the Line” D. Incandescent lamp E. Ketchup F. Liquid-fueled rocket G. “Midnight Ride” H. “Molly Pitcher” I. “Mona Lisa” J. Mount Vernon K. Printer L. Quaker advocate M. Telephone N. \$10 bill O. Wireless telegraphy
2. Johnny Cash (1932-2003)	—	—	—	
3. Elizabeth Griscom Ross (1752-1836)	—	—	—	
4. Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931)	—	—	—	
5. Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)	—	—	—	
6. Alfred Carlton Gilbert (1884-1961)	—	—	—	
7. Robert Hutchings Goddard (1882-1945)	—	—	—	
8. Alexander Hamilton (1755-1804)	—	—	—	Medium i. Battle of Monmouth ii. Conceptualized helicopter iii. Duel with Aaron Burr iv. Engraver v. “Father of the Deaf” vi. Founded Philadelphia vii. Friend of Charles Lindbergh viii. Inductee in two Hall of Fames ix. Invented “Erector Set” x. Invented the “Factory Tour” xi. 1000 inventions xii. <i>Poor Richard’s Almanac</i> xiii. RMS <i>Titanic</i> xiv. Upholsterer and flag-maker xv. Valley Forge
9. Henry John Heinz (1844-1919)	—	—	—	
10. Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937)	—	—	—	
11. Mary Hays McCauly (1754-1832)	—	—	—	
12. William Penn (1644-1718)	—	—	—	
13. Paul Revere (1735-1818)	—	—	—	
14. Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519)	—	—	—	
15. George Washington (1732-1799)	—	—	—	<b>Difficult</b> a. Boxcar (2) b. Observation Car (1) c. Pullman (2) d. Reefer (9) e. Vista Dome (1)

Answers are published in TLR... somewhere.

# A Sneak Peek of several 2008 Convention Tours

