

# KEEPING TRACK

Official Newsletter of the Abilene Society of Model Railroaders

Volume 19, Issue 8

October 1, 2023

Editor: Jim Gibson

## ***The Word From The Veep***

### **Jared is going from operating scale trains to running big ones**

As many of you may already know, I am stepping down from my position as Vice President of ASMR. I do this not because of any bad reasons, but because of only a good one. Recently, I accepted a job offer from Union Pacific to work as a conductor. This new job will bring a lot of changes to my life and I don't want them to be a burden against me fulfilling my duties as VP. I know there are many of you who can fulfill the roles of VP and President just as well, if not better, than I did.

At any rate, what does this new job mean? Well for one: I'm not going to be around the club as much as I'd like to. It's going to take time for me to adjust to my new schedule -- or lack thereof! As of writing this I am still waiting for my official start date. Once I get that confirmed, I will be headed to one of UP's training centers for three weeks of classroom learning. This will be followed by weeks of on-the-job training in Sweetwater. Then two more weeks in the classroom, and finally some more on-site training. All in all the initial process will take about 12 weeks. After that, I can't say for certain where I will end up.

Whether near or far, though, I will continue being a committed member of ASMR and I look forward to giving updates and insight as to my new adventures in life. I'm happy to have had the privilege to serve as your VP for the last two years, and I'm looking forward to a bright future for our club.

***Your VP, Jared Burleson***

## **KRBNRR Ops Session Report**

The Sept. 16 KRBNRR Ops Session on my home layout took place with six operators on hand. Before it, though, Lonnie Thompson came by on the Sept. 12 to "dog catch" (finish) the train order he was not able to complete during the August session, and that nobody else would volunteer to finish for him, either. The six

operators included Cecil Walston, Jonathan Williamson, Jon Prestridge, Jonathan Scherr, Dusty Garison, and his son Travis. Cecil and young Jonathan worked as a crew, as did Dusty and Travis. Each crew moved one train during the session with four train orders being



Above Left: Cecil Walston (L) and his young sidekick Jonathan Williamson pause briefly for the camera during the September KRBNRR Ops Session. Above Right: ASMR member Jon Prestridge is fully focused on his train orders as he works out a switching move during the same Ops Session.

Photos by Ken Riediger.

completed. I did not find any errors on any of the manifests that were run. Good job guys!! Lonnie is setting up a special Ops Session for a group of his "real" railroaders during October, so I will include something about how they did in my next report. Hope to see you at the next regular session on October 21, at 1:30 pm. **KR**

## **ASMR Meeting Highlights**

VP Jared Burleson opened the Sept. 2 ASMR business meeting at 10:00 a.m. Sec'y. Cody Hilliard read minutes of the Aug. 5 meeting, and Treas. Ken Riediger reported a total club assets balance of \$8,636.91. Two members were reported late on dues for a total of \$260.

Jared said that Ken R. still has C. T. Kelly and Ken England train items for sale, and will have his next Ops Session on Sept. 16. He also mentioned that a club DT402D controller is missing, and asked members to keep an eye out for it.

The status of the club's layouts was discussed, including a short on the lower level of

the HO-scale layout that Ken found and repaired, progress Jim Gibson is making on the canyon area, and work Kent Stark is doing on an N-scale layout and the drywall he is installing on the south wall of the HO-scale layout.

Ken said he has talked to Scott Fritz about the club's website and he (Ken) and Terry Andrew are going to get together with Scott to sort out some of the details on getting it back up and running again...and updated. Members discussed an upcoming train festival in Abilene. Ken said he got an email from the Grace Museum saying they are planning a T&P display that will run from July 2024 to July 2025, and asking if we are interested in participating. Jared introduced new member Jon Prestridge.

Members discussed the election of officers next month and Gene Danielski nominated Dan Schueler for president. Dan said he would think about it and make a decision by election time. Members were reminded that Ken's home layout Open House will be Nov. 18 – 19, and the club's Open House will be Dec. 9 – 10. The meeting closed at 10:39 a.m. JG

### The Editor Speaks

*Things are coming along slowly but slowly in the canyon area*



Above: This view I took of my canyon modules shows the large area I'm talking about that I have plastered, put color washes on and covered partially with scenic materials. I still have to finish working my way around the left side to the backdrop where some blue foam is showing and add more scenic ground cover in places. The road along the front leads to where a campground will be on the edge of a lake when the whole area is finished. The two buildings on top are only there temporarily.

When I started work on the canyon area of the club's HO-scale layout, I knew it was going to be a big job, but I didn't realize just how big it would turn out to be. This is by far the most extensive model railroad project I ever tackled, and progress has been painfully slow even though I have spent many weekday afternoons working on it in addition to the usual Saturday and Tuesday club sessions. At least I am now

to a point where I have been able to add scenery plaster, color washes, and ground cover to a large area of the blue foam base and start making it look like real terrain. I still have a long way to go, but the progress I have made lately is encouraging me to keep plugging away.



Above: This view shows about half of my modules on the back, west wall of the club layout, with the town scene buildings once again in place.

On a related note, I decided recently to put the buildings back out on my modules against the west wall, and it made me happy to see most of them in place again. It was almost like Christmas opening the boxes they were packed in and finding familiar ones and others that I had forgotten about because they had been stored away so long.

It's also nice to see that some other scenic areas of the layout are starting to come together too, including Kent Stark's rural scenes near my modules, Terry Andrew's switching modules on the opposite side of the backdrop wall behind my canyon area, and Jonathan Scherr's modules below Terry's where Jonathan is modeling an industrial siding that exists in south Abilene. David Hills is also working on scenery on some modules on the layout to the right of Terry's area, and some other members have been restoring Ken England's memorial "Abilene" area. JG

## ASMR's Jon Prestridge visits Texas Northern Model RR Club

Recently, ASMR member Jon Prestridge visited the very impressive Texas Northern Model Railroad Club layout in northeast Dallas, and came back with a report for the newsletter.

The TNMRR, which bills itself as the "largest permanent layout in north Texas", and now has 90 members, started in 1982 as a modular club operating out of members' homes. It is currently located in a 4,000 sq. ft. climate controlled space in a business park on the Plano Rd. It features a highly detailed and well-developed 3,000 sq. ft. HO layout with two independent main lines, each nearly 250 feet long, with 28" minimum radius curves. There are numerous industrial sidings and a large staging yard to enhance the club's regular operating sessions, and provisions to run trains in DC or DCC.

Club dues are \$50/month and members have 24/7 access to the facility and layout via a keyless entry pad. Based on availability, members can also rent lockers to store their train gear on site. The club also has a small, semi-permanent, N-scale layout in operation. Below are some pictures I took of the HO-scale

layout while I was at the club. They give you at least some idea of the size and level of detail on the TNMRR's amazing setup. But if you are in the Plano area and have the opportunity, I highly recommend that you check the train club out for yourself. I can guarantee that you will not be disappointed!  
**JP**

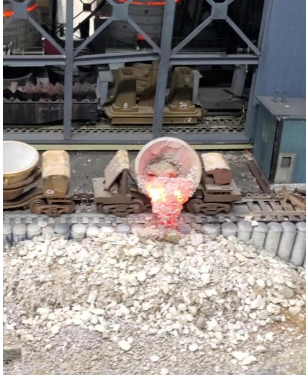
## Highlight photos of the Texas Northern Model RR Club's HO-scale layout



Above: Overall view of the giant, 3,000 sq. ft. TNMRR Club's HO-scale layout. To the right are some of the lockers members can rent.



Above: (Left) A busy city scene with plenty of tall buildings, and even one under construction. (Middle) Some rough terrain with a curved wood trestle and lots of rocky cliffs. (Right) This drive in movie has an actual picture show playing on the screen!



Above: (Left) This molten metal car dump display is lighted to look like red hot slag pouring out, and is part of a giant steel mill complex. (Middle) Intermodal yard with overhead container crane in action. (Right) A good example of one of the many industrial sidings available to make the club's operating sessions interesting. That Purina Chows building looks familiar. Photos by Jon Prestridge