

KEEPING TRACK

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The Word From The Veep

Hidden Gems on Ebay

I often find myself perusing the internet on sites such as Ebay or Facebook Marketplace with no set goal. I've pondered as to why this has become common for me to do in my spare time, and I believe the answer lies in the "hidden gems" one can come across.

Let me explain: Ebay has been my go-to for buying models for some time. Sure, you may not be able to find exactly what you are looking for. But often the unexpected items I come across intrigue me most. In fact, I acquired one of my favorite locomotives this way. Someone had taken a Bachmann Baldwin Sharknose and modified it with custom detail, a sound decoder, and custom lights. I figured it was a "no brainer" buy and was able to get it for about half of what the retail would be. Another example happened last week. I found a listing for a Walther's Amtrak Viewliner passenger car. These models were produced in small numbers more than a decade ago. I had lost hope of finding one for myself without spending three figures on an outdated model. But thanks to my "treasure hunting", I was able to add this one to my Amtrak fleet at an affordable price.

I guess the whole point I'm trying to convey is to always keep an eye out. You may not find exactly what you are looking for when shopping the secondhand market, but those unexpected finds can make your searching pay off.

Your V.P., Jared Burleson

KRBNRR Ops Session Report

My home layout Kannapolis River and Buffalo Northern Railroad operated five trains on Aug. 19, with a total of eight people present. Seven operated and one was a "railfan". There were three rookie engineers. Cecil Walston brought two guests, Joseph Speed and his stepson Jonathan Williamson. Dusty brought a guest Scott Austen. We also had rookie (and new ASMR member) Jon Prestridge, and "old hats" Jonathan Scherr and Terry Andrew. Cecil took little Jonathan as his engineer while

New member becomes a "ballast king" in short order



Jon Prestridge rejoined ASMR in August after about a two decade hiatus. He was a member when he was 15 years old, but dropped out to pursue other interests until the model train bug bit him again recently and he linked up with the club again. Anxious to get involved, he asked to learn about scenery techniques, and Jim Gibson started him off with a little OJT on ballasting on some mainline track on former member Allen Goff's old modules. A quick study, Jon was off and running on his own in no time and making great progress. It would be wonderful if some other members who aren't presently helping out would follow Jon's lead, because a lot of scenery needs to be done on the layout between now and our Open House in December.

Photo by Jim Gibson

stepdad Joseph was a railfan. Dusty let Scott engineer while he conducted. Jon, Jonathan and Terry each took their own trains.

Lonny Thompson had come on July 25 to run trains because his job as a UP engineer doesn't allow him to attend our regular Ops Sessions. He was able to run his favorite, the branchline train. Then he started a second train, a local with lots of switching, but was only able to get about halfway done before he ran out of hours. When this month's crew showed up, nobody wanted to "dog catch" (finish) Lonny's train, so

he will have to come back between sessions again and do it himself. Jonathan had to leave early for another commitment, and Dusty finished his train orders, while Scott finished his train. As always, there were a few mistakes made, with a couple of them caught and corrected during the session. It was great to have such a big turnout, and see everyone having so much fun. Hope to see you at the next session on Sept. 16, at 1:30 p.m. **KR**

The Editor Speaks

Updates on former members, and something else of interest

This month I heard from two former members who filled me in on what they've been up to lately. Luke Scott left Abilene with his new wife Lily to attend a gunsmith school in Pittsburgh about the same time ASMR moved out of the Professional Bldg. on Westwood. But several unexpected bumps in the road of life delayed his actual enrollment until recently. After finally getting started, he describes the school as "absolutely awesome". Classes are small and allow for a lot of one-on-one instruction, and he is learning all sorts of valuable metal and wood working skills that he believes will be useful in other pursuits beyond gunsmithing. He is especially impressed by his "phenomenal" engraving instructor who, Luke says, does "legendary" work, and he hopes to be able to emulate some of the techniques of this outstanding artist in metal on future gun projects of his own.

Model train-wise, Luke had to sell off a lot of his trains to cover unplanned expenses that came up, but fortunately was able to keep his favorite HO-scale T&P locos. He has started restocking with several interesting brass HO_{n3} (narrow gauge) locomotives, a scale he said he has been interested in for a long time.

Allen Goff was a very productive member of ASMR and even wanted to serve as club president. He was actually elected, but unfortunately never got to serve because of job constraints as a UP engineer. He is living in the DFW Metroplex, and told me in a recent email: "I miss y'all a lot there in Abilene." He said things are going well, and he's been working a lot in the Dallas yard the past four months. This is nice because it allows him to be home every day in his apartment. He has joined a DFW area "free mo" model train club, and is currently

working on four 26" wide X 6' long modules with intermodal capabilities. "You know I love those stack trains, ha, ha." is how he ended his email.

On a personal note, when Allen was here, he was eager to learn scenery techniques and work on the club layout. I had the pleasure of showing him how to ballast track and then watch him "go to town" and ballast every bit of track on the club's HO-scale layout in the Professional Bldg. that needed it, which was considerable at the time. He then went on to do an impressive amount of other scenery on several modules.

During August, I had a similar experience with new member Jon Prestridge, who right away expressed a strong desire to learn about and get involved in doing layout scenery. As described in the caption under the photo on the front page showing Jon at work, as soon as I gave him some brief "on the job training", he took off on his own installing ballast in areas that need it. Best of all, his big smile let me know he enjoys doing it and what he is accomplishing.

I would like to remind all ASMR members that our big HO-scale layout needs a lot of scenery work. With more willing workers like Jon, and a little "OJT" if it's needed, we can get it done. If you're interested, don't be bashful. Talk to me or any other "old hand" and let's see where you can get involved, help out, and increase your enjoyment of the hobby. **JG**

ASMR Meeting Highlights

V.P. Jared Burleson opened the Aug. 5 business meeting at 10:07 a.m. Sec'y Cody Hilliard read minutes of the July 1 meeting, and treasurer Ken Riediger reported an accounts balance of \$8,925.21. Members approved both.

Jared said one member was eight months late on dues for a total of \$160, and Ken has HO-scale train items for sale. Ken will have a home layout Ops Session on Aug. 19. Jared also said that a club-owned DT4 throttle is missing, and reminded members to return throttles and other items to where they got them after using them. Kent Stark said he would install a throttle rack on the layout so they can easily be properly stored when not in use.

Jim Gibson read the draft amendment to the club bylaws he prepared that pertains to the election of club officers, and it was approved unanimously by a membership vote.

Two new members were announced, Carlos Chacon and his grandson Dragon. ASMR participation in a proposed train festival that's in the works for next year, sponsored by the Preservation League, was mentioned and discussed briefly, as was an NMRA show in Grapevine on Aug. 21 - 26. There was also a short exchange about railcars from a derailment in Abilene on June 25 still being in place along the mainline track near the Pioneer Drive crossing with weeds growing up around them now. The meeting closed at 10:27 a.m. **JG**