

KEEPING TRACK

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In Memoriam



During a brief period less than a month ago, ASMR suffered the loss of two “senior” club members. Gene Danielski, 81, (left) died on July 30, and Wayne Smith 84, (right) died on Aug. 10.

Gene, a native of Manhattan, NY, a Vietnam veteran and an Air Force retiree, was a member of the club for more than two decades. He faithfully commuted to meetings and club events from his home in Merkel, and one of his favorite activities was regularly running a track cleaning train around the club’s large HO-scale layout, an endeavor that will be missed, for sure.

Wayne, was born in Ranger, TX, grew up in Cisco, and migrated to Abilene in 1958. He was a charter member of ASMR, and drove trucks for a living. For the first several years of the club’s existence, he would borrow a tractor/trailer from the trucking company he was working for and haul the club’s HO-scale modular layout components to and from the Civic Center where they were set up for the weekend of the Preservation League’s annual Railfest event. Wayne lived and breathed model trains, and had a substantial home layout that he loved to share with his family and friends.

Both of these long-time ASMR members were good guys to know and share our hobby of model railroading with, and if there are model trains in heaven, they are no doubt both getting acquainted with a whole new crowd of “train buddies”. Rest in Peace, Gene and Wayne.

JG

The Word From the Prez

How my railroad equipment collection got started

We all probably have that one item that we relate to when we look back at a new hobby or collection as the item that really kick-started a new “rabbit hole” for us to head down. For me, although I had been involved with model railroading and minor collecting for a number of years, I had not really collected a lot of railroad



items. But, that all changed with the lantern pictured to the left, an Adlake #1283. Built to Denver & Rio Grande RR specifications, it has a few features unique to this railroad. I could go into more detail, but for the sake of keeping this article to a reasonable length, please ask me

about them in person if you’re interested.

There are three reasons this lantern is so special. One, it was in original condition when I found it. The only thing other than cleaning it needed was replacing a rusty font. Two, I found it at an architectural salvage business, which was a very unusual store to find *any* railroad items in, and it actually was the *only* railroad related item in a very large warehouse there! Three, the store was in Bloomington IL., well over 1,000 miles from the closest D&RGW rail.

Anyway, after buying the lantern for a fair price, my “search bug” was stoked to look for additional similar items, and before long I was a full-fledged collector! Many collectors today rely heavily on eBay, auctions, or railroad item dealers, but stay alert and remember that you never know where you might stumble on a desirable item. Sometimes great, reasonably priced “gems” are hiding right in plain sight!

Your President, Dan Schueler

KRBNRR Ops Session Report



Above (L to R): Lonny Thompson, Jon Prestridge and (foreground) Jonathan Scherr. Photos by Ken Riediger

The Aug. 17 Ops Session on my KRBNRR home layout saw six operators and one railfan show up. We had a short lineup with seven trains remaining on the schedule to finish the computer generated "day". Our operators included Reed Leggett, Jonathan Scherr, Jon Prestridge, Lonny Thompson, Cecil Walston and Billy Banaw. Our railfan was Amanda Leggett.

Billy, working as conductor, teamed up with Cecil, who handled the throttle. They ran past a couple of stops along the route, and of course Cecil had to give Billy a hard time for not telling him to halt the train at certain points.



Reed got to run the passenger train with all its "station stops" along the way. This was different for him, but

Left: Amanda Leggett and her son Reed.

at least he didn't have to do any switching, which he's not real interested in yet. We were able to get done early,

and Lonny, Jon, and Reed started helping with the "between sessions" reconciling of rolling stock on the layout. Hope to see you for a new "Day" next session, on Sept. 21 at 1:30 pm. **KR**

ASMR Meeting Highlights

Pres. Dan Schueler opened the Aug. 31 meeting at 10:00 a.m. Sec'y. Cody Hilliard read minutes of the Aug. 3 meeting, and treas. Ken Riediger reported an accounts balance of \$7,717.94, and said four members are late on dues for a total of \$495.

Dan commented that several new scenic areas on the HO-layout that have been under construction are really looking great, and that

Ken's next home layout Ops Session will be Sept. 21. Ken said the 2025 fundraiser calendars are in and members need to pick some up to sell to friends, relatives, business associates, etc. Thirty-five have sold so far, and they will be available for public sales at the Preservation League's Railfest event Sept. 4 – 5, along with Ken's train items.

Terry Andrew said he is working the bugs out of the signal system he is installing on the HO-scale layout, and expects to have it all up and running in the not too distant future. Dan said that paperwork for ASMR to participate in the "Abilene Gives" event next year will be filed in January with help from Preservation League director Josh Black.

Cody said he is working with Chris Bisset on getting a new security system for the club and will keep us updated. Ken said one of our relatively new members, Richard Devisser, contacted him and said he must resign due to health issues. Dan reminded members about election of club officers next month, and solicited nominations. Members voted unanimously to nominate the current officers to continue in their present positions for another year. The meeting closed at 10:20 a.m. **JG**

The Editor Speaks

Lucky neighbor gets to see Big Boy, meet crew in Cheyenne



With whistle blowing to announce its arrival, UP Big Boy #4014 eases into the Cheyenne, WY depot. Photo by Eddie Lewis.

When I was selling my neighbor Eddie Lewis an ASMR calendar recently, he said he had something he thought I would like to see. He then whipped out his cell phone and brought up a terrific video of UP "Big Boy" locomotive #4014 he had taken in July as it eased into the station in Cheyenne, Wyoming, with awesome whistle blasts announcing its approach.

A big crowd was on hand to welcome #4014 back to its home base, and as soon as it was parked, the engine's crew climbed down and started visiting with people. Eddie struck up a

conversation with one of them named Paul Guercio, who told him some interesting things about the huge 4-8-8-4 articulated steam locomotive that have happened while it's been touring the country. One story really caught my attention, and I thought it was worth sharing.



Big Boy #4014 crewmember Paul Guercio. Photo by Eddie Lewis

Paul said that as they were emerging from a tunnel on one of their runs, they got a warning that a rock slide up ahead had covered the track. Approaching the area cautiously they stopped, took stock of how bad the slide was, and decided they could push the debris off the track and get past it safely. So, they attached an iron panel to the front of the loco's "cowcatcher" like a plow and slowly shoved the rocks and dirt out of their way. The maneuver worked well except for one big boulder, which rolled around and came back against the side of #4014, hitting and breaking a pipe.

This could have put the locomotive out of commission for awhile, except that the "Big Boy" touring train is equipped to handle a wide variety of emergency repairs. As Paul explained to Eddie, one of the cars in the consist pulled by #4014, in addition to tank cars for fuel and water, crew cars, etc., is a car containing a

complete machine shop, some spare parts, and an assortment of stock materials. So, in short order mechanics traveling with the train removed the broken pipe, fabricated a replacement, and installed it in place of the broken one. Big Boy #4014 was soon on its way to thrill another crowd of eager steam train enthusiasts at the next stop along the way. **JG**

Parting Shot



Gene Danielski (L) and Wayne Smith (R) are shown here working together on one of the club layouts in a photo taken several years ago by Jim Gibson.

I was going through my computer photo files looking for something this week when I came across this photo completely by chance, and it kind of blew me away! It just happens to show the two recently deceased ASMR members who are memorialized on the front page of this newsletter, Gene Danielski and Wayne Smith working together. I took it several years ago, shortly after we had moved from North 2nd St. to the Professional Bldg. at North 6th St. and Westwood, and members were all busy setting up the club's expansive, two-level HO-scale layout in our new "home". I'm still amazed over the coincidence (?) of unexpectedly finding this picture of Gene and Wayne at work together that I took almost a decade ago, in the wake the sudden, closely-timed deaths of both of them just over a month ago! It really boggles my mind. I'll close this parting shot by repeating the closure of their memorial: Rest in Peace, Gene and Wayne. **JG**