



NEWSLETTER

Happy Two Thousand Ten!!

Thanksgiving has come and gone. The Christmas train is parked at the siding with a last little wisp of smoke curling forlornly from its stack. All vestiges of Christmas have been swept away from the retail stores as quickly as they appeared last Fall (or was it Summer?) It's time to hang up the new calendars and remember to write "2010" on your checks.

We've had two club meetings back-to-back since the last newsletter. First, we met at Gary Jones' home the day after Thanksgiving for our regular club meeting and then the following Saturday, December 5, was our annual Christmas party.



Gary is the consummate host. He greets everyone with a smile and a handshake and gives you the sense that he is truly interested in what you are saying when you're talking to him. His trains are gorgeous and his Christmas layout is great. There's a lot packed into a small space and plenty of action to hold your interest.

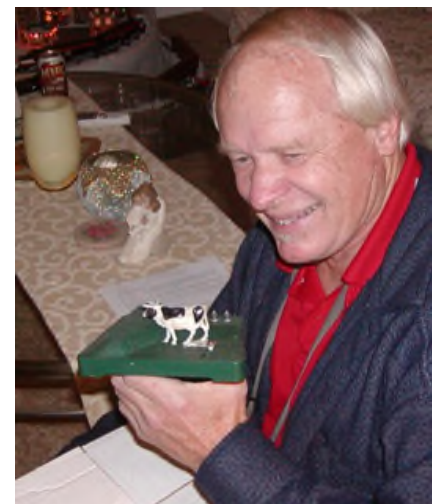
I wonder if Gary ever uses the phrase, "good enough". He is a very talented guy and if his trains don't convince you, check out his slot cars or fish tank or garage projects.

It's a bit of a drive for most of us to get to his house in Scott's Valley but I look forward to it every November.

The backbone of the GGAFc, Jake Jacobsen, has recovered nicely from his heart valve replacement surgery. We had to kid him just a bit and suggested that Lionel come out with a "Jake on the Track" accessory to honor his bovine donor. We're all glad that he's "moooving" along as good as new!

Thirteen members made the trip to Gary's house. Don Matthies reported that at the recent Pasadena Cal-Stewart show the president of the TTOS had confided to him that the S gauge version of their commemorative car was being dropped because of the 500 minimum quantity required by Lionel.

Dennis Bagby, Don Stratton, et al of Southern California are planning "S Fest West" for April 30 through May 2, 2010. Rumor has it that a Karo Syrup tank car will be the commemorative item for the event.



Paul Guaraglia told us that his new 76' x 4' layout is progressing nicely and we are all anxious to see some passenger consists rumbling along behind massive AF motive power on those long straightaways. I'm pretty certain that there is a new Big Boy in his arsenal that is ready to make a test run as soon as the track is clear.

Frank Portera showed us a deck of cards that he salvaged from disaster, they were dated 10/1/48 and were issued by Souther Pacific Railroad showing points of interest along their routes. Perhaps they were used to pass the time on one of the S.P. Daylight runs of that era.



Jake showed his recently acquired 1947 passenger cars. They were the green, painted plastic, long truck versions of the 654, 653, and 652's. Note the flangeless wheels that were used in the third position on these trucks so that the cars could negotiate curves.

Raffle winners for our monthly draw were Paul Guaraglia who chose a S Helper GN hopper (73201) and Miles Standish who generously gave his pick of a Gilbert boxcar (6-48318) to Frank Portera who had admired the car earlier in the evening.

Vice President, Paul Moreci, reminded us that it's time for our biennial club officer elections. After some discussion it was decided to nominate and elect officers at our upcoming January meeting at Bill Riechmann's house. Any club member who wants to run for President/coordinator, Vice President, or Secretary and cannot make it to the next meeting is encouraged to contact Jake, Paul, or me and we will nominate you.

John Dalton told us about a new online club that is forming for American Flyer enthusiasts. It is the brainchild of Randy Thompson of Denver, Colorado and has; "no dues, no officers, no rules, no politics, just fun with American Flyer trains". They are going to concentrate on Gilbert American Flyer trains from the '40's, '50's, and '60's and there is already a wealth of information available on the website. Visit it at www.AmericanFlyerClub.org

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RANCH.....

We had a roomful of members, spouses, children, and friends at our Christmas dinner party at *The Ranch* restaurant in Hayward. Thanks go to Paul Moreci for arranging the event again this year.

It is especially nice to see wives and kids at the party and I'm sure that we all appreciate their patience as we occasionally get side tracked with railroad ramblings. After socializing for a while, we sat down to a great dinner. I thought that the broiled salmon was quite good but John Lee said that he always goes for the prime rib because it's the signature dish at this establishment. Hhhmmmm, I guess a ranch would more likely specialize in beef than it would in seafood so he's probably got a good point there, but the Pacific Ocean is only about a half an hour's drive away so salmon is still a good bet. If we go back there next year I'll try the beef.

After dessert and a few more cups of coffee we were all ready for the main event. Everyone had already studied the raffle prizes in advance so there

was a steady stream of members lined up to buy tickets.

Jake brought out some goodies from the club's stash of raffle items and Paul Guaraglia is the perennial whiz kid at getting donations from hobby shops, manufacturers and publishers.

**THE PAT ALTIERI AWARD**

This year's recipient of the Pat Altieri Award was pleasantly surprised, maybe even stunned, when Steve Haug made the presentation. I know this with some certainty since it was my name that he announced! I said at the time, and I still believe it's true, that there are a number of club members who are equally or more deserving of this award. I understand that it was a close vote and I am flattered to be this year's honoree.

**TOY DRIVE**

John and Constance Dalton organized the club's efforts again this year to provide toys to a needy group. They collected 50 gifts from club members as well as 3 gift cards and delivered them to *Abode Services* in Fremont. *Abode* provides help for families in crisis and has received a four star rating from *Charity Navigator* for four years in a row. They are the number one ranked human services agency for cost effectiveness in the State of California. Please watch this:

<http://www.youtube.com/>

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

Here's wishing you a happy, healthy, prosperous, fun, exciting, train-filled wonderful New Year! See you on Friday, January 15 at Bill Riechmann's house, 7:30 P.M. Consider running for a club office, it's always good to have fresh hands at the helm.



SPECIAL THANKS TO MARK BOYD FOR THESE PHOTOS FROM OUR CHRISTMAS DINNER

