



# The Whistle



## OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

COWCATCHER DIVISION LONE STAR REGION NMRA

VOL 9 NO 4 APRIL 2025

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

DIRECTOR'S REPORT	1
LEADERSHIP TEAM	2
DATES TO REMEMBER	4
TRAIN SHOWS	5
TREASURERS REPORT	5
TRIVIA QUIZ	5
AREA MODEL RAILROAD CLUBS	6
HOBBY SHOPS	7
RAILFAN VIDEO OF THE MONTH	7
MAKE AND TAKE CLINIC	8
ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM HONORS	9
SHOW AND TELL	9
MARCH CLINIC PHOTOS	11
LSR 2025 CONVENTION	13
NRHS SPECIAL MOVIES	14
NMRA NATIONAL CONVENTION	18
OPERATIONS ON THE LEE SUB	15

NOVEMBER'S MEETING WILL BE AT 10am ON SATURDAY THE 12TH AT THE TEXAS WESTERN MODEL RR CLUB AND VIA ZOOM. SEE EMAIL FOR ZOOM LINK

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

We had a terrific meeting last month and I want to thank Mike Mackay for putting on Part 2 of his clinic "Operate like the Pros. Switching cars the prototypical way".

This month's clinic and May's clinic will be a "make and take PLUS". What I mean by that is, not only are we building in April, a freight house designed, and laser cut by Duane Richardson but at the May meeting, Cole Rash will show us how to paint the detail parts for it. As of now 32 members have signed up for the clinic and I am sure Duane will have a few extra.

*cont. on page 3*

*The Whistle April 2025*

*Page 2*

**LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**DIRECTOR**

DICK BRANNAN

**SECRETARY**

JOHN "TRAPPER" KIRKPATRICK

**TREASURER**

DAVID GREIN

**PROGRAM MANAGER**

HAROLD BERENZWEIG

**ASST PROGRAM MANAGER &**

**TRAIN SHOW COORDINATOR**

RUSSELL GIFFORD

**OPERATIONS MANAGER**

JIM DAVIS

**ASST OPERATIONS MANAGER**

DAVID RANNEY

**ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM ADVISOR**

MIKE MACKEY MMR

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

ROBERT "BOB" MANGRUM MMR

**CONTEST ADVISOR**

CASEY AKIN

**CONTEST ADVISOR**

CODY AKIN

**NORTH TEXAS COUNCIL OF TRAIN  
CLUBS REPRESENTATIVE**

DICK BRANNAN

**MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR**

MIKE ROSS MMR

**ASST MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR**

DAVID CRUMPTON MMR

**SERGEANT AT ARMS**

DON ROWE

**VIDEOGRAPHER**

DAVID KRANDA

**COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR**

ERIC SMITH

**WEB MASTER**

STEVE GRATKE

FOR CONTACT INFO SEE  
COWCATCHER DIVISION WEB SITE

<https://cowcatcherdivision.org/>



## *The Whistle April 2025 page 3*

### DIRECTOR'S REPORT CONT.

The cost of the kits is \$35 for N, \$45 for HO, \$50 for S and O. To entice more participation the Division will contribute \$20 to the first kit each members buys, a second kit will be full price. Cash or check will be accepted so be sure bring that "old crusty wallet" of yours and part with some of your stockpile of cash.

The Train a Plooza at the Grapevine Convention Center was very well attended, the attendance paid was around 1300. A big thanks to Mike Walter, Dave Steckler, Eric Smith and Jim Ogden for manning the booth on Saturday. Mike Ross and I were there on Sunday and were able to sign up two new members. The Lone Region's Convention is fast approaching. Blues Express 2025 is in Baton Rouge on June 26 -29th. Please check out the website and look at the great clinics that are being presented. Our next meeting is Saturday April 12th, please bring a friend.



BNSF BUSINESS CAR AT  
BROWNWOOD TX 24 JAN 2008



*The Whistle April 2025 pg 4*

## **DATES TO REMEMBER & REGIONAL TRAIN SHOWS**

THURSDAY TEXAS WESTERN RR  
CLUB BUSINESS MEETING FOR  
MEMBERS AND PROSPECTIVE  
MEMBERS ONLY

7 pm -9 pm 6808 FOREST HILL DR.

FOREST HILL, TX 76140

### **APRIL**

12-13 NEW BRAUNFELS TRAIN SHOW

12-13 OK CITY TRAIN SHOW

25-26 GREATER TULSA AREA TRAIN  
SHOW

### **MAY**

17 JEFFERSON TX MODEL RR CLUB  
SWAP MEET

### **JUNE**

**26<sup>TH</sup>-29<sup>TH</sup>** LSR CONVENTION BATON  
ROUGE

### **JULY**

11-12 TRAIN SHOW STILLWATER OK

**14<sup>TH</sup>-19<sup>TH</sup>** NMRA NATIONAL  
CONVENTION NOVI, MICHIGAN

### **AUGUST**

23-24 AUSTIN TX TRAIN SHOW

### **SEPTEMBER**

LABOR DAY WEEKEND THE 90<sup>TH</sup>  
ANIVERSARY OF NMRA

20-21 TEMPLE TRAIN SHOW

27-28 PLANO TRAIN SHOW



## TREASURER'S REPORT

1 MARCH BALANCE	\$7582.81
RECEIPTS	\$1954.50
EXPENDITURE	\$216.70
31 MAR BALANCE	\$9320.61
CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT \$22933.08	



## TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE MONTH

WHAT IS AN EYE?

LOOK FOR ANSWER IN THIS MONTH'S  
NEWSLETTER

## RAILFAN VIDEO OF THE MONTH ON YOUTUBE

AUSTIN & NORTHWESTERN RR  
(AUNW/RAILTEX)



## **AREA MODEL RAILROAD CLUBS**

### **COWTOWN MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

MEETS AT THE HANDLEY COMMUNITY CENTER, UPSTAIRS 3024 FOREST AVE, FT WORTH,

WEBSITE <https://www.cmrrc.net>

### **CLMRR**

MEETS TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS & SATURDAYS

THE LAYOUT IS LOCATED AT 3904 VISTA RIDGE LN

ALVARADO, TX 76009

FOR INFO CONTACT LEE MARTIN AT 817-666-5367

### **DALLAS/FT WORTH O SCALE CLUB**

NORMALLY MEETS TWO SATURDAYS PER MONTH IN RICHARDSON

CONTACT TO BE IDENTIFIED

STAN SCHWARTZ [ss124@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ss124@sbcglobal.net)

### **DENTON AREA MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

MEETS 2<sup>ND</sup> TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 7PM IN THE DENTON SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER DOWNTOWN

HO & N SCALE MODULAR LAYOUTS

<https://www.facebook.com/damrrc/>

### **NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER OF NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

MEETS 7:30-10:00 PM FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH, OFTEN (BUT NOT ALWAYS) AT GRAPEVINE TOURIST & VISITORS INFORMATION CENTER AT MAIN ST AND FWWR RAILROAD TRACKS

<https://ntxnrhs.org>

### **TEXAS WESTERN MODEL RAILROAD CLUB**

LOCATED AT 6808 FOREST HILL, 76140

VISITOR HOURS: SEE CLUB WEBSITE

<https://www.facebook.com/texaswesternmodelrailroadclub>

<https://www.twmrrc.org>

### **TRINITY N-TRK**

MEETS AT HOBBY WORLD, FT WORTH AT 6:30PM

CHECK WEBSITE FOR TIME

<https://www.trinityntrak.com>

### **TNMRC**

MEETS AT 11999 PLANO RD, SUITE 154, DALLAS 75243

<https://www.texasnorthern.org>

*The Whistle April 2025 pg 7*

ANGELO HOBBIES

5600 RUFÉ SNOW DRIVE #106

NORTH RICHLAND HILLS 76180

DISCOUNT MODEL TRAINS

4641 RATLIFF LN

ADDISON 75001

MODEL TRAIN CROSSING

1113 W. PIPELINE RD

HURST 76053

HOBBYTOWN USA

746 GRAPEVINE HWY

HURST 76054

HOBBYTOWN USA

500 E. ROUND GROVE RD

LEWISVILLE 75067

WILD BILL'S HOBBYTOWN USA

1112 W. ARBROOK BLVD

ARLINGTON 76015

**NMRA POLICY STATEMENT**

*EFFECTIVE MARCH 31, 2020, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY ADOPTED BY THE NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION AT ITS BOARD MEETING ON MARCH 7, 2020, DIVISION 1 OF THE LONE STAR REGION OF THE NMRA, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE COWCATCHER DIVISION, WILL REQUIRE ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18, WISHING TO ATTEND ANY DIVISION EVENT, TO BE PERSONALLY ESCORTED BY THEIR PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN.*

*ADDITIONALLY, PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN MUST SIGN A CURRENT DOCUMENT STATING THAT THEY WILL REMAIN IN VISUAL CONTACT WITH THEIR MINOR AT ALL TIMES.*



## **APRIL/MAY CLINIC**

### **A MAKE & TAKE**

#### **DUANE RICHARDSON MMR**

This month's clinic will be part one of a Make and Take by Duane Richardson. It will be constructing a freight shed. Duane is one of several Master Model Railroaders in our division and although we all learn from each other it is always a special treat to hear from our most experienced and talented members.



Group-build with Duane Richardson MMR. We will do a REA lcl freight house in various scales.

Duane says to bring the following:

- 1) Some kind of cutting board or mat
- 2) A scalpel/hobby knife (X-acto)
- 3) 3 colors of paint for wall and trim, black and gray for tarpaper roof
- 4) Paint brushes
- 5) Glue or cement (carpenters glue or Aleens is best)
- 6) Something to keep it square (if you don't have a machinist's square, a clamp or even a Lego brick works)
- 7) Paper towels





## *The Whistle April 2025 page 9*

### NMRA ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM HONOREES



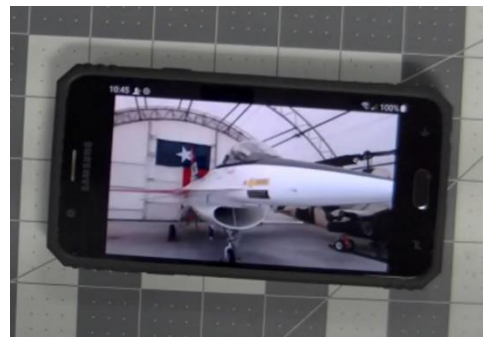
MAL NOONE GOLDEN SPIKE  
SHOW AND TELL



CHEAP CLOTHESPINS CONVERT TO  
SMALL CLAMPS



FORT WORTH AVIATION MUSEUM



INFO ON NEVADA NORTHERN  
RAILROAD

SHOW AND TELL CONT.



IPHONE APP CALLED **MEASURE** A SIMPLE AND EASY WAY TO MEASURE IN THE FIELD



A SOLUTION TO NARROW SPACE BETWEEN TRACK AND EDGE OF LAYOUT WITH PLEXIGLASS ATTACHED

DEAL AND DUD





# The Whistle April 2025 page 11

PHOTOS FROM MARCH CLINIC

MIKE MACKEY MMR



- The Importance of Efficiency
- The Foundation of Planning
- Leveraging Location Knowledge
- The Art of Blocking
- Addressing Customer Needs
- The Pursuit of the Fewest Moves
- Complicating things for additional frustration

## Key Principles

## The Importance of Efficiency

- Slow and inefficient railcar switching significantly contributes to delays in rail shipping operations.
- A substantial amount of railcar time is spent in rail classification yards, partly due to poor switching.
- Inefficient movements lead to wasted direct labor time and compound existing labor shortages.
- Higher fuel consumption and inefficient use of switch crew and equipment result from poor railcar switching.
- The ultimate goal is to achieve fewer moves, reduce walking distances, and attain optimal railcar coupling sequences.
- There are various solutions to switching problems, but some are more efficient and quicker than others.



## The Foundation of Planning

- Thorough planning with detailed switch lists is essential for efficiently switching railroad rolling stock.
- To enhance rail movement safety and efficiency, a plan should guide each rail switching operation, detailing every movement.
- Inspecting rail tracks before receiving inbound cargo and presetting switches are crucial planning steps.
- Reviewing switch lists allows for strategic alignment of moves before any physical switching begins.
- Marking switch lists serves as a reminder of car destinations during the switching process.
- Thinking through and planning moves ahead helps avoid operational bottlenecks.



## Leveraging Location Knowledge

- Knowing the territory is fundamental, encompassing the available tracks for classification, their capacity, and rolling direction.
- Understanding track clearance points is vital to prevent side-swiping other cars.
- Knowledge of runaround tracks or wyes is necessary for maneuvering cars.
- Assessing tail room in switchbacks and available space to switch without obstructing main tracks or road crossings is critical.
- Familiarity with the location of cars (inbounds, outbounds, setbacks) is paramount for efficient switching.
- Experienced switchmen can quickly grasp the track layout of a new yard.

## *The Whistle April 2025 page 12*

### PHOTOS FROM MARCH CLINIC CONT.



#### The Art of Blocking

- When reviewing switch lists, identify opportunities for "cuts" – groups of coupled cars going to the same place – to move multiple cars simultaneously.
- Avoid switching too many cars at once, as it can complicate engine handling.
- Train blocking may not always follow the customer order; factors like facing point spots might necessitate switching out of sequence.
- Understanding how the train is blocked upon arrival in the yard is key to planning efficient moves.
- Experienced operators understand that switching often involves an "interwoven mixture of pickups and setouts," rarely following the switch list order precisely.



#### Catchers Division 1 Meeting

#### Complicating things for Additional Frustration


- Red Boards, Yellow Boards, Green Boards
- Blue Flags
- Slow Orders
- Shoo Flys
- Hot Boxes, Dragging Equipment
- Bad Order Cars
- Personality Cards
- Situation Cards



#### Addressing Customer Needs

- Many customers provide specific spotting instructions that dictate where their cars need to be placed.
- Aim to pick up cars in an order that aligns with the customer's needs, minimizing subsequent moves.
- The type and destination of certain cars (e.g., tank cars) might influence the switching order to optimize train length or access to other tracks.
- Consider the customer's location and the direction of the industry spots (trailing vs. facing points) when planning the switching sequence.

*TO VIEW THE ENTIRE CLINIC SEE THE COWCATCHER WHISTLE FOR MARCH 2025 ON YOUTUBE. THE CLINIC STARTS AT 1:02:14*



#### The Pursuit of the Fewest Moves

- The core principle of efficient switching is to execute the job with the fewest and least time-consuming moves.
- Experienced railroaders develop a "vast store of knowledge" to anticipate and minimize the number of necessary moves.
- Continuously seek better ways to switch a facility by reducing wasted movements.
- Consider the walking distance for ground personnel (brakemen) when planning moves, as excessive walking adds time and inefficiency.
- Even in model railroading, the goal is to plan moves strategically to avoid unnecessary back-and-forth and minimize the "brakeman's walk".
- Job satisfaction for ground crews often comes from effectively working through the "puzzles of switching" in an efficient manner.

ANSWER TO THIS MONTH'S  
TRIVIA QUESTION:  
TRACKSIDE SIGNAL



Registration Is Open at  
[www.BluesExpress2025.com](http://www.BluesExpress2025.com)



**Register and Save the Dates, June 26 – 29, 2025,  
for the Annual Lone Star Regional Convention**

The 2025 Lone Star Region Convention will be held in Southern Louisiana  
for the first time in thirty years and you won't want to miss it!  
There will be layouts and other railroading opportunities you've probably  
never seen, in a region rich with interesting and exciting sights. (And food!)

**June 26 - 29, 2025  
Holiday Inn Baton Rouge South  
9900 Airline Highway  
Baton Rouge, LA 70816**

Visit [www.BluesExpress2025.com](http://www.BluesExpress2025.com) to register, make  
hotel reservations, and see updates on convention activities.  
Stay tuned to *The Marker Lamp* and the [www.BluesExpress.com](http://www.BluesExpress.com)  
website as more details become available.

**Register today for the Early Bird Discount,  
mark your calendars and plan to attend!**



FOR MORE INFO ABOUT  
TOURS, CLINICS, LAYOUTS,  
SPECIAL CONTEST SEE THE  
NEW ISSUE OF THE  
MARKER LAMP FOR  
SEPTEMBER 2024

*The Whistle April 2025 page 14*

**North Texas Chapter, National  
Railway Historical Society  
\*\*Presents\*\***

**A DOUBLE FEATURE--  
IMAX Experience**

**2 Exclusive Railroad Films on  
the BIG IMAX SCREEN  
for ONE DAY ONLY!**

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

*Both Films were created and  
directed by **celebrated IMAX  
Film creator Stephen Low!***

*Both films are captured on  
15/70mm motion picture film,  
the world's largest film format,  
for a unique and visually  
stunning giant screen  
experience.*

**Saturday, April 26, 2025 Doors  
Open at 8:40 am; SHOW  
TIME is 9:00 am!**

**Show Location: CINEMARK  
IMAX, 11819 Webb Chapel  
Road, Dallas, TX 75234**

**TICKET FOR BOTH  
SHOWS is \$16 - Paid to North  
Texas Chapter, NRHS**

***All tickets MUST be purchased  
IN ADVANCE***

***by Wednesday, April 23, 2025!***

***NO TICKET SALES AT THE  
DOOR***

***For More Information and to  
purchase tickets,  
click on the following link***

***<http://www.NTXNRHS.ORG/Movie>***



## *The Whistle April 2025 page 15*

### OPERATIONS ON THE LEE SUB PART 6 “CREATING A REALISTIC FREIGHT CAR ROSTER OF THE TEXAS AND SOUTHERN RAILROAD”

By BOB MANGRUM MMR 456

In developing your freight car roster, the first thing to consider is the era you are modeling. On the Texas & Southern the year modeled is May 1966. Although this is late for the “transition era” to end, in proto freelancing, one can “bend” the facts as one desires. As a result, T & S has many 40-foot boxcars in revenue service in May 1966. With May of 1966 as the “current” time, only freight cars built in May of 1966 or before that month would be considered for acquisition for the railroad. (Of course, there are always exceptions!! It is your railroad. 😊)

Once you establish the time constraints the next item to consider would be the locale you are modeling. If it is coal mine country or narrow gauge in the

Rockies, this will impact on the type of freight cars as well as the number of such cars needed for that type of industry served by your railroad. Prototype railroads will provide that answer more readily than freelance, but you can still determine an answer and a guide as to how many and type you need to acquire.



That brings one to the availability of a particular model. Whether we like it or not, we are dependent on what the manufacturer has produced and is available. If you are freelancing, you would probably be more interested in undecorated models in order to wear your chosen livery; if modeling a prototype, you will probably have that road offered in ready to run.



## *The Whistle April 2025 page 16*

For the prototype railroads, the best source is the Official Railway Equipment Register (ORE). This was published every year and still is available for the current years.

Once you have identified the year you could check libraries for copies of the ORE as well as online with the particular railroad historical society for that year. In addition to originals both online and in print, you might find the year you are looking for on eBay or at train shows from a collector. In addition, there are some years that have been reprinted.



In addition to providing you the information about what a particular railroad had as rolling stock in that year, you will

find information on size, car number series and any special equipment on the car.

This is a great source for both freelanced and prototype modelers.

Regardless, if you are modeling a prototype railroad and a particular sub or area you can consult the historical society for that railroad. These historical groups maintain records concerning rolling stock by years and types as well as photos. An internet search might yield similar results.

Developing or duplicating a historical roster of rolling stock for your area, time or railroad is a fun learning experience

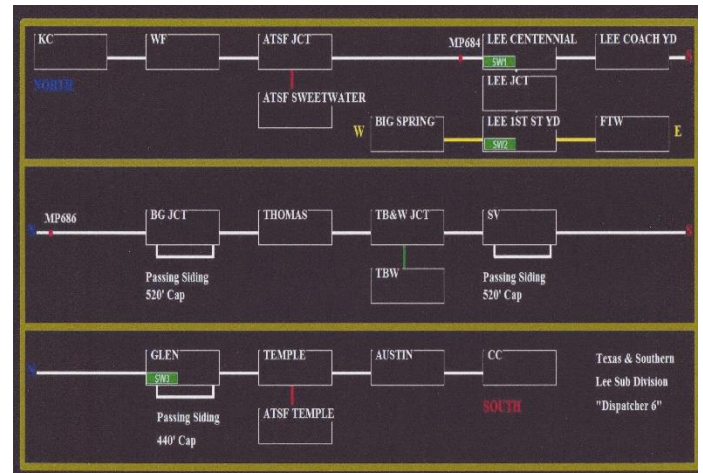
On the T&S an attempt has been made to maintain a balance of foreign vs home road cars. This is easier to say than to do, but with a little work, and self-discipline at the train show or hobby shop, one can achieve a degree of success.



Based on prototype documents, the consensus is about 50% home road in each category of freight car type. Some types of cars will easily lend themselves to achieving or surpassing this target and some types will not. But again, it is your layout and model railroading is supposed to be fun.

Next month we will discuss types of paperwork one might need to have a historical correct /realistic looking operation session. Until then I hope you have Green Boards and no hot boxes on your run.

Bob



TS LEE SUB DISPATCHER PANEL



NATIONAL MODEL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION  
2025 National Convention

# STATION No. VI

Hosted by:  
the NORTH CENTRAL REGION

## July 14-19, 2025

Open to ALL model railroaders! You do not have to be an NMRA member to attend! **REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!**

Our location – Sheraton Detroit-Novi, MI  
A suburban location with FREE parking!

### CONVENTION GOALS and HIGHLIGHTS -

Our main objectives are to provide events of value, items attendees will see as worth their money, all at the lowest possible cost. \*\* We will honor the traditions of past conventions but at lower cost and with greater flexibility. \*\* This convention will be shorter, starting at 1 PM on Monday and continuing through Saturday afternoon with a banquet Saturday evening. \*\* Note that registration includes all layout visits and operating sessions, and all activities at the hotel except Modeling with the Masters, and admittance to the National Train Show. \*\* We will support all the traditional activities of the SIG's. \*\* The National Contest will be fully supported. The contest will be in a prominent room and will be run by the National Contest team. There will be space for model displays, modular layouts and other functions. Those putting their models on display will have the option of entering the People's Choice Contest. \*\* We will have several prototype tours which may include a Ford plant tour and a cruise on the Detroit River with an emphasis on the industrial aspects of the waterfront. \*\* We expect to have at least 90 clinics. The clinics will be varied, and each will be given twice. \*\* We expect to have at least 60 layouts open for visit. Most layouts will be at least 900 sq. ft. in size running to over 3,000 sq. ft. in one or more cases. All layout visits and op sessions will be self-guided so you may take your time.

**<https://nmra2025.com/>**

