



ALL ABOARD!!

Winter 2016

Newsletter

Music City Chapter TCA

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Email Address Reminder

If you received this chapter newsletter in the mail, it means we don't have your email address (if you have one). Email is easier and faster for us to use.

Please send you email address to
Petrone.v@comcast.net.

Include your name and TCA number.

President's Message

Let me start by wishing everyone a Happy New Year!

A special thanks to all of our officers, vendors, members, and non-members who helped put on another great Christmas Train Show. Our attendance was around 1,000 and all of the vendors I talked with had a good show. Several people, including myself, had a "hot show." The temperature outside climbed to 74 degrees, tying a 143 year old record. I know it was at least that warm inside the hall.

The Fairgrounds apologized for our discomfort. They had winterized all but one air conditioning unit and it was not sufficient for the outside temperature. To top off our day, the PA system went out mid-day! Because of this, we could not give out door prizes, make announcements or dealer acknowledgements. The children's train sets were awarded because we asked the parents for phone numbers. Even with these issues, everyone I spoke with said they enjoyed the show.

As the winter months set in, we have a chance to enjoy spending time running trains or perhaps working on our layout. I am in the process of adding buildings and developing scenery on my layout. Maybe a good time to call a friend that has wanted to see your layout. Enjoy a train day!

On February 6, the Music City Chapter Officers will meet at 1:00 PM at the Opryland Cracker Barrel.

Other events are the Bowling Green Train Show on February 20 and the World's Greatest Hobby Show in Knoxville on February 27.

Our Spring Show is April 2 at the First Baptist Church in Donelson, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. This is a good show to reconnect with our fellow members and friends. Come join us!

In parting, I would like to share. During the month of November, my uncle passed at 97 years young. He fought in WW II under George Patton and received a few honors, including the Bronze Star. I was very proud of him. Our Club is blessed with many vets who risked their lives to keep our country free. Thank you for your service.

Ron Hirst
President



Editor's Notes

The Annual Christmas Toy Train Show is always an adventure, and this year was no exception. The unseasonably warm weather was an unusual occurrence that presented some unique challenges. As Ron mentioned in his message, the warm hall and the lack of a PA system were not ideal. Even with all of those challenges, it was a great day! People were waiting in line to come in and happy shoppers were leaving with their new purchases.

All of our operating layouts were running. Our O gauge Club layout included a camera and video that recorded the train as it made its way around the track. The Skyline Cafe opened at 8:00 AM and served food and beverages throughout the day.

A new addition this year was Christmas photos, available during the Show. We even had a picture taken of all the Club Officers.

Over the years, we have enjoyed some modest success in putting on our Christmas Show. As a result, I am often asked by dealers and TCA members,

“How do you do it year after year and how much does it cost?”

Well, it's no secret that the goal of our show is to present our Club and the TCA in a favorable light, to promote the hobby, and to make a small profit.

We have developed a database of over 3,500 participants and over 200 dealers to invite to the Show. We market our show in hobby magazines, newspapers, and flyers placed in local museums and hobby shops. We contract with the Tennessee State Fair Grounds for the rental of the hall, tables, chairs, electrical drops, and public address system. We pay the Fairground for the participants to park. Free parking is not really free! We purchase five Lionel “ready to run” train sets. And, we help with expenses for those participants working the show or bringing operating layouts.

The total cost of the show is in excess of \$12,000. We generally realize a net profit of approximately 10-15%.

Every year, we look for opportunities to enhance the show experience for both the dealers and the participants. As we look to 2016, we welcome your ideas in helping to promote the TCA and our shows.

Music City Chapter 2015 Statement of Operations

Bank Balance 01/01/2015	\$18,566.56
Spring Meet	\$207.56
Summer Meet	\$117.46
Christmas Toy Train Show	\$1,700.51
Miscellaneous Income/Expenses	(\$362.80)
Bank Balance 12/31/15	\$20,954.89

Submitted by
Vic Petrone, Treasurer

Announcement

Music City Chapter Spring Show
Saturday, April 2, 2016
Donelson First Baptist Church
2526 Lebanon Road
Nashville, Tennessee

Registration Form Enclosed



Train Trivia

Submitted by Joseph Marabeti

Railroad history in America has its earliest beginning dating back to 1815 when Colonel John Stevens gained the first railroad charter in North America. What was the name of the railroad?

Answer: New Jersey Railroad Company. Source: Iron Rails in the Garden State: Tales of New Jersey Railroad by Anthony J. Bianculli.



A Piece of American History - Buying a Watch in 1880

If you were in the market for a watch in 1880, would you know where to get one? You would go to a store, right?

Well, of course you could do that, but if you wanted one that was cheaper and a bit better than most of the store watches, you went to the train station!!!!

Sound a bit funny?

For about 500 towns across the northern United States, that's where the best watches were found.

Why were the best watches found at the train station?

The railroad company wasn't selling watches, not at all. The telegraph operator was.

Most of the time, the telegraph operator was located in the train station because the telegraph lines followed the railroad tracks from town to town. It was usually the shortest distance and the right-of-ways had already been secured for the rail line.

Most of the station agents were also skilled telegraph operators as that was the primary way they communicated with the railroad. They would know when trains left the previous station and when they were due at their next station.

And it was the telegraph operator who had the watches.

As a matter of fact, they sold more of them than almost all the stores combined for a period of about nine years.

This was all arranged by "Richard," who was a telegraph operator himself. He was on duty in the North Redwood, Minnesota train station one day when a load of watches

arrived from the East. It was a huge crate of pocket watches. No one ever came to claim them. So, Richard sent a telegram to the manufacturers and asked them what they wanted to do with the watches.

The manufacturer didn't want to pay the freight back, so they wired Richard to see if he could sell them. So, Richard did.

He sent a wire to every agent in the system asking them if they wanted a cheap, but good pocket watch. He sold the entire case in less than two days and at a handsome profit. That started it all.

He ordered more watches from the watch company and encouraged telegraph operators to set up a display case in the station offering high quality watches for a cheap price to all the travelers. It worked! It didn't take long for the word to spread and, before long, people other than travelers came to the train station to buy watches. Richard became so busy that he had to hire a professional watch maker to help him with the orders. That was Alvah.

And the rest is history, as they say. The business took off and soon expanded to many other lines of dry goods.

Richard and Alvah left the train station and moved their company to Chicago, and it is still there. YES, IT'S A LITTLE KNOWN FACT that for a while, in the 1880's, the biggest watch retailer in the country was at the train station.

It all started with a telegraph operator, Richard Sears and his partner, Alvah Roebuck! Bet you didn't know that!

Okay, maybe you did! I didn't!

Now that's history!

*Submitted by
Everett Davis*

22nd Annual Christmas Toy Train Show Winners



William Lane Linville
Nashville, Tennessee
Boy Scouts of America Train Set

Bob Cizmaric
Hendersonville, Tennessee
Polar Express Passenger Set

Christopher Nolen
Jackson, Tennessee
Penn Flyer Remote Control Set

Alex Dickens
Old Hickory, Tennessee
Polar Express Freight Set

Ava Hunter
Old Hickory, Tennessee
Polar Express Passenger Set

Congratulations
to the
2015 Winners of the
Ready to Run
Lionel Train Sets!