



# THE SEMAPHORE

The Monthly Newsletter of the Wichita Toy Train Club – Established 1986

Visit us on the web at [www.wichitatomytrainclub.org](http://www.wichitatomytrainclub.org)

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## WICHITA RIVERFEST KIDS CORNER

Wichita Toy Train Club set up at Kids Corner on Saturday and Sunday, June 4-5, with having to improvise a layout using boards and boxes under the table legs for the layout to be level. It was very difficult to work with but our members made it happen. Look at the smiles on the children's faces... Mike Miller is even smiling. This is one of the featured pictures on the Wichita RiverFest homepage billboard. Next year WTTC will need a different location. Thanks to Mike Gable, Coordinator, and to the WTTC members that participated at Kids Corner.

## Wichita Toy Train Museum Open House, June 7



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## Wichita Toy Train Museum Open House, June 7, Continued



Wichita Toy Train Museum hosted an open house on Tuesday, June 7, 1:00 – 7:00. Unfortunately, WTTC was not listed on the daily list, but under Museums. Attendance was approximately 140, which is significantly lower than previous years. On Saturday and Sunday, there were additional visitors with their RiverFest buttons. A special Thank You to Charlie George for setting up his steam engine outdoors for parents to take pictures. Thank You to Tresa Miller, Coordinator, and to the WTTC members that participated.

## **2016 Center of the Nation Model Railroad Expo**



The 2016 Center of the Nation Model Railroad Expo was held on Saturday and Sunday, June 4-5, at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson, Kansas. The Expo was sponsored by Kansas Center Model Railroaders and hopes to have the Expo annually. Next year members need to bring a jacket as we were in an air conditioned building. WTTC set up the S Gauge Modular Layout and Javen Schmucker's O Gauge Layout on Friday evening. Don Peters and Norval Alliston were vendors. WTTC participants were Charlie George, Austin and Gary Nicholas, Rich and Nancy Parsons, Ron Schmitt, Mike and Shari Shockey and Javen Schmucker. A special Thank You to Javen Schmucker, Coordinator. Rex Stevens was also present.



What is this crop field made of?



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**Next Business Meeting is Saturday, July 2, at 8:30 am.**

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Parties – July 2 (Saturday) Birthday Party, 10:30 pm, 10-year old boy. Plan on running trains after the Business Meeting.

Exhibit – Kansas Railfest, Union Station (on Douglas across from Great Plains Transportation Museum), Saturday 9 – 4, set up on Friday, time to be determined. Display O Gauge Modular Layout. More information will be provided by email.

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Shari

Our last visit to your museum was another great event for me and my family! I continue to be impressed with the members who are so helpful and willing to share the hobby with everyone.

I have been thinking about membership, but I'm unable to participate with work sessions.

I am still hopeful for a visit to my family in November, and appreciate your invitation to visit the museum on **Tuesday** night. I will stay in touch as the time gets closer to see if we can make another museum visit happen.

Jim Leach from New York

*(Thanks everyone!)*

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## COHEN LAYOUT PROGRESS



During May, Bill Cohen worked on his layout. Many members continue to work on the layout to meet the August deadline. Bill, WTTTC will be ready for September!

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## *WTTC was selected as a Lionel Ambassador for 2016-2017!*

### **Thank You to John Flinn, the Officers, the Board of Directors and all Members.**

This is an accomplishment for the Wichita Toy Train Club and Museum. The letter lists the program overview, WTTC's responsibilities which many are already met during the year, what WTTC will receive, and WTTC's nation-wide recognition.

Dear Future Lionel Ambassador,

First of all, I would like to introduce myself, I am Lauren Morris and I am the Event Manager and Ambassador Program Lead at Lionel Trains. In the summer of 2015 Lionel re-launched the Ambassador Program with a twist from the past. Instead of individual hobbyist we reached out to a number of model railroad clubs who we felt would best represent the Lionel and American Flyer brand in their communities. After a submission and selection process the chosen clubs banded together to become Lionel Ambassadors for one calendar year.

The 2015-2016 year has been exciting for the Lionel Ambassadors and while one year is closing we are excited to begin another. The Wichita Toy Train Club are cordially invited to submit your club for potential consideration for the upcoming 2016-2017 Ambassador Program.

Who: Your club!

What: Select train clubs personally chosen by the Lionel team that will locally promote, educate, advocate, display and run Lionel Trains in their home market

When: The program consists of a 12 month period that begins July 1, 2016 and will end June 30, 2017.

Where: Locally

Why: To help leverage the grow model railroad hobby to enthusiast of **all ages!**

It sounds like fun, right? Here is a quick rundown of your clubs responsibilities if chosen for the Ambassador Program.

- 1) Lionel will send your club 200 total catalogs, 25 branded hats, 500 orange bags and up \$2500.00 (MSRP) of new product to your club throughout the year. Product is chosen by your members and must be **in stock** to receive.
- 2) Your club will showcase the new product you select and share it online and offline with the community. (1 point)
  - a. Examples: YouTube Video Reviews, posting on social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.), club newsletters and web sites. (1 point)
- 3) Hosting one public Lionel event per month – minimum of 6 per year/maximum of 12. (1 point)
- 4) Produce one public article per month reviewing a Lionel product and sharing it online (1 point)
- 5) Submit all required materials to Lauren Morris by the deadline each month to receive credit
  - a. All materials must be submitted by 5PM on the last Friday of the month (more details to follow) (1 point)

So how do you become the Ambassador Club of the year? It's easy – the program is based solely on a points system. You will receive one point per task completed each month. The club with the most points at the end of year will become the Ambassador Club of the year and will receive a visit from our President Howard Hitchcock and myself to a future club event. Also, the winning club will receive a winning boxcar and of course – bragging rights for a year!

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## Future Ambassador Letter Continued

Here are a couple other qualifications we are looking for in participants.

- 1) Maintain a positive club image both online and offline surrounding Lionel
- 2) Hold public events at a safe location
- 3) Place Lionel Ambassador Club logo on your web site and club materials
- 4) Form a strong relationship with a local dealer
- 5) Represent only Lionel product during any sponsored events (some exceptions are allowed).

If you would like to see what some of our current Ambassadors are up this year – check out our web site. When you become an Ambassador to Lionel we are here to promote you as well and will place you on our web site and will be happy to share your work on our social media sites. We are here for you like you are here for us.

### Timeline and Next Steps

May 16<sup>th</sup> – Conference call with potential Ambassador Clubs to review and questions that need to be answered – 8PM EST (subject to change based on availability).

May 30<sup>th</sup> – Submission document due to Lauren Morris to be considered for a spot as a finalist

June 1<sup>st</sup> – Club finalist will be announced

June 17<sup>th</sup> – Finalist must return signed terms and all required documents

July 1<sup>st</sup> – Ambassador Program official start date

July 31<sup>st</sup> – Month one review

June 30, 2017 – Final submissions due

July 15, 2017 - Club of the year announcement

Lionel is excited to have another great year with this program – and we want your club to be a part of it.

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## Lionel Collectors Club of America

**Kansas City, Missouri - 46th Annual Convention July 25-30, 2016**

**WTTC is displaying the O Gauge Modular Layout at the convention Thursday – Saturday, July 28 – 30. If you are going to LCCA, you may want to bring trains to run.**



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## 2016-2017 CLUB AMBASSADORS TO LIONEL



With constant support from model railroading clubs all over the country, Lionel Trains has led the toy train industry with innovative engineering, flawless manufacturing and superior customer service for over 115 years. The 2015-2016 Ambassador Program was a success and helped us make greater strides in the toy train industry. With that success, we are excited to announce the program will be returning for the 2016-2017 year.

After two months of reviewing submission forms for the program, the Lionel team narrowed the field down to ten clubs that we felt would best represent Lionel Trains as ambassadors for the 2016-2017 year.

The Ambassador program extends exclusive benefits to these clubs to assist them in their mission to grow the hobby and pass on the “Magic of the Trains” to the next generation.

Want to know what the Lionel Club Ambassadors are up to in your area? Be sure to check out this page often for an update on upcoming events!



### Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers

Hinsdale, IL  
Number of members: 74

An S – Gauge club for over 39 years, the Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers have been running/displaying Lionel American Flyer equipment on average 9 shows a year. They promote the model railroad hobby and educate the public on model railroading, scene construction, S Gauge Hi-Rail and scale and Lionel conventional and Legacy operation and benefits. The club has several outings per year to museums, layouts and full scale train events. They rotate with 3 other S Gauge clubs hosting the Fall S Fest event in October

The CASG is returning to the program for the second year.



### Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club

New Lenox, IL  
Number of members: 134

The Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club has had a close working relationship for more than 10 years and is a return ambassador for 2016-2017. Since acquiring their new clubhouse in New Lenox, IL over 10 years ago, the club has developed a strong recognition in the south suburban Chicago area through nine monthly open houses, articles published in local print media and stories broadcasted on Chicago television news programs. The centerpiece of the open houses and the attraction for the news media is the clubs main floor layout – the largest interactive club layout in the mid-west – where Lionel Trains are run throughout the day, along with Lionel operating accessories. Also operating during open houses is a smaller layout on the mezzanine where children under the supervision of a club member can run the trains.

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## Golden Gate American Flyer Club

California  
Number of members: 50

The Golden Gate American Flyer Club has been actively promoting American Flyer and S- Gauge model railroading since 1970. The club features a modular group that runs trains for the public. They exhibit their modules at three or four Great Train Shows around the Bay Area each year and take advantage of other opportunities as they surface. In October of 2014, they were invited by the world renowned San Francisco Exploratorium science museum to run trains as part of a toy-themed festival. Every third year the GGAF hosts the Flyer Fest West, rotating with two other clubs.



## Nassau Lionel Operating Engineers

Levittown, NY  
Number of members: 41

The Nassau Lionel Operating Engineers, Inc. have been an established member of the community since 1983. During that time, the club averages 10 open house days a year and takes their portable modular layout to four community events annually, benefiting local community organizations and veteran groups. Each holiday season, the members of NLOE construct static displays in at least four public libraries featuring Lionel trains – ranging from pre-war to modern era.



## New Jersey Hi-Railers

Paterson, NJ  
Number of members: 50+

The NJ HiRailers Model Railroad Club is a 501© 3 organization located in located in the historic Bunker Hill section of Paterson, New Jersey and houses the countries largest O scale layout that measures 285 long and 35 feet wide. In addition, the club houses television host Tom Snyder's Standard Gauge layout and the famous Soprano's layout that was located in Bobby Baccalieri (Steve Schirripa) garage

The layout continues to evolve with major enhancements being completed in 2016. They have expanded the use of TMCC and Legacy technology to the entire layout and are in the process of adding the Legacy technology to their Millhouse River Turntable. The NJ Hi Railers pride themselves on the dedication provided to members for the best operating experience which can be seen through their webcams and in the faces of their visitors. This is the second year that the NJ Hi Railers represent Lionel as an Ambassador.



## Queen City Hi-Railers

Hamilton, OH  
Number of members: 40

With the largest traveling modular “O” gauge layout in the Midwest, the Queen City Hi-Railers are regular participants in large local train shows. With their very flexible modular layout, they can tailor operations and displays to fit local community events. Along with their well-established holiday season of shows, they continue to look to expand their exposure by participating in shows outside of the Fall/Winter season and beyond local markets.

In addition to their traveling display, they maintain a stationary layout at the QCHR clubroom for member use, club recruitment and to develop enhancements to the club operations. The QCHR club rents a space in a community building, where, along with four other local model train clubs, there exists an “unofficial” regional group of model railroading. Together, these clubs organize an annual train club open house to share their love for model railroading.



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## TMB Model Train Club

Farmingdale, NY  
Number of members: 81

TMB Model Train Club membership consists of approximately 80 men and women that love O-gauge trains. The club rents a location of 4000 sq. ft. in Farmingdale, NY. Since 2013 the membership has been in the process of constructing a layout. Currently in operation are 2 mainlines, 2 branch lines, and a subway system. Currently under construction are the logging line as well as various scenery and wiring projects needed to complete the layout.

Members usually meet each Friday night to work on the layout or run trains. Work and run sessions can vary depending on the time of year. The months between November and February are mostly geared toward run session whereas the remainder of year is mostly devoted to construction, maintenance, and scenery work.

The club also has a modular layout that is used to promote the club at various community events, and train meets around Long Island. The modular layout has also toured various schools for the disabled and the veteran's hospital bringing the love of trains to those individuals that are unable to make it to our annual open houses.



## Toy Train Operating Society – Southern Pacific Division

Costa Mesa, CA  
Number of members: 200

The TTOS Southern Pacific Division are an operating group that focuses on getting families into the toy train hobby and keeping people in the hobby through running and collecting trains, and creating and building portable layouts.

As a division of the Toy Train Operating society, TTOS and the Pacific Division are continually looking for opportunities to promote and educate the public through the use of their Lionel and American Flyer layouts and displays.

One member, Jeff Meyers developed the concept of the “All Aboard FasTrackers” squares that are now used at shows with over already built ([www.allaboarfastrackers.com](http://www.allaboarfastrackers.com)). These small layouts can be run at home, at small venues or added to other squares to make bigger layouts. In addition, Myers teaches and trains enthusiasts using the Command Control System.



## Toy Train Operating Society – Silver State Division

Boulder City, Nevada  
Number of members: 26

Founded in 1983, the Silver State Division of the Toy Train Operating Society is the only 3-rail O-Gauge club with a large permanent layout in Nevada. The layout is inside a refurbished 1912 Pullman passenger car. In 2003, the Nevada State Railroad Museum along with the Friends of the Nevada Southern Railway- Model Railroaders partnered with the Silver State division to refurbish and operate a Lionel train layout in the “Club Car.” It officially opened for public weekend visits in 2013. The club also operates a scenic 5 x 32 four tier layout that is fully wired with TMCC and Legacy.

In addition to the Club Car and local events, the Silver State Division started a Boy Scout Merit Badge program with the NSRM and the Friends.



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## Wichita Toy Train Club

Wichita, KS  
Number of members: 75

The Wichita Toy Train Club and Museum is dedicated to promoting model railroading in the Wichita area and south Kansas. The club currently hosts open houses on the 2nd and 4th weekend of each month and the current building has 4000 square feet of layouts. The "O" gauge layout includes hands on learning for kids.

In addition to the 4000 square feet of layouts the club features an "O" and "S" gauge traveling modular layout that are taken to various events and train shows in the area. They dedicate themselves as an organization that loves the model railroad hobby.



*The crop field pictured on page 2 is made out of a grassy door mat cut into strips.*

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*The WTTC May 2016 Minutes will be sent by separate email.*