

The Journal

The Prairie Lakes Division is a community of model railroaders from NW Iowa and SW Minnesota and operates within the Thousand Lakes Region of the National Model Railroad Association

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

By Jay Davis

I hope everyone is healthy and enjoying the New Year. So far so good for my family. The end of 2020 was not so good however. My wife lost her grandmother before Christmas and while at her funeral, I found out that we had lost one of our own PLD members. The next day, my father (our convention director) fell off on some stairs while help a plumber install a water heater. If the fall wasn't bad enough, the water heater landed on top of him. He suffered a fractured pelvis in three places. He is home and recovering, but no basement time for him! He is getting around with help of a walker for a while.

On December 21 I lost a mentor and friend. He fought a long battle with pancreatic cancer. Miles Rohan was a big part of our PLD core group. He was one of the founding fathers of the PLD. He served as superintendent for many years, was always a fixture at PLD events, and served as TLR president. In 2019 he was awarded the NMRA's Presidents award for Division Service. Several years ago he took over control of the Smokey Mountain Railroad which is the large permanent display railroad at



Miles painting backdrops during a clinic at the Algona meet

the Clay County fairgrounds in Spencer, Iowa. The layout was in need of some TLC and a modeler's touch. Miles recruited many great local modelers and brought this

railroad up to a new showplace in modeling.



Miles operating his home layout, The Rusty Spike

The

Rusty Spike was his home layout. It ran like clockwork, with great track work and an automated signal system and dispatching panel. The design of the layout was well thought out and modified over the years to make the most of operations. I was lucky enough to have operated on his layout countless times. It was always a challenge to get the way freights over the road and keep out of the way of other trains.

He was always willing to share his knowledge of model railroading, his life experiences, and his mas-



Miles working on the Kossuth County Fairgrounds Lionel layout's control panel

tery of DCC and Digitrax. It was a pleasure to have known him and travel with him to many great railroad ac-

tivities such as Trainfest in Milwaukee, a Prototype Modelers event in Naperville, IL, and the National Convention in Kansas City. I will miss him very much, but for him, his pain and suffering are finally no more.

[continued on page 2]

[Superintendent's report continued from page 1]

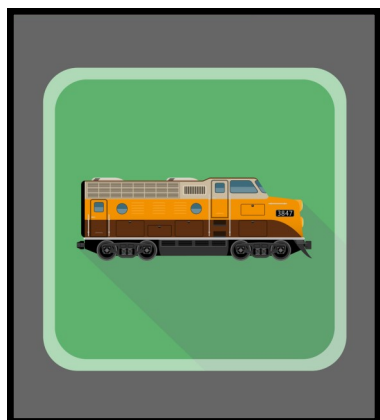
As the Covid pandemic continues on, we are hopeful that we will be able to have our spring event in Sibley. We will have to wait and see what the Sibley – Ocheyedan school district says about if we will be able to hold it at the school. The safety of our membership is the most important to the board and myself, so we will need to keep that in consideration too.

There will be another Journal before the meet, and that is where we will post our final decision on if we will host the event. Worst case, we will try to have another event in the fall of 2021. The contest categories are the same from the last journal. They will remain the same in case we are unable to have an event this spring.

Keep modeling and stay healthy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Plans are in the works to open high speed train routes in the United States? Europe, Japan and China have had these for many decades. There is a route planned in Florida to open in 2022 that will top 125 miles per hour, and another scheduled for 2023 between Las Vegas, Nevada and southern California. This train will top 200 miles per hour!



Calling all Modelers

Do you have something special you've added to your layout? Are you currently completing a project, or have you finished one you want to share?

Send your pictures and a short explanation to editor, Jay Davis and your project/layout can be featured here in the journal.

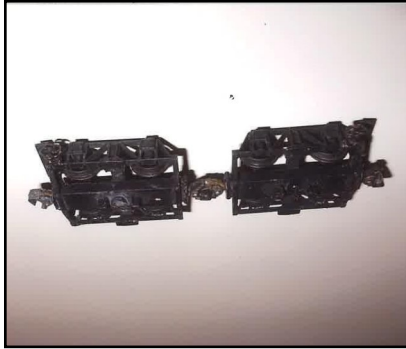
Digital photos and explanations are preferred, but you can also send hard copies of each.

Contact Jay at his email address: jdandice22c@hotmail.com with any questions, or to share your projects.

The Log Car by Tim Linn

What to do with some disconnect HO logging trucks?

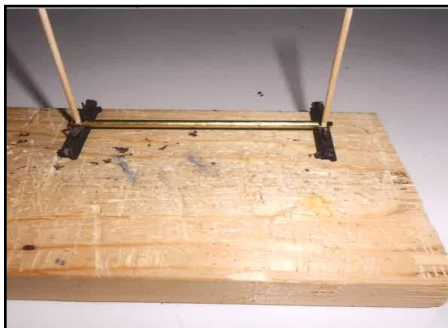
Years ago, I acquired a dozen Kadee disconnect logging trucks with plastic logs. Somebody had



tried gluing three logs in a triangle shape onto the logging trucks with no luck. The plastic logs looked unnatural.

When talking to a friend one day, he told me he had a bag of honey-suckle branches he had saved over the years. He offered them to me on the condition that I would get them down from out of the rafters of his garage. After getting them down, I took a look at them and realized the bark on them did look like miniature logs. The only issue with these honey-suckle branches was trying to find 4 and 5 inch straight pieces. Apparently the branches don't grow very straight. I was able to find 15 to 20 fairly straight pieces. I cut them 3½ to 4 inch lengths and now had my logs.

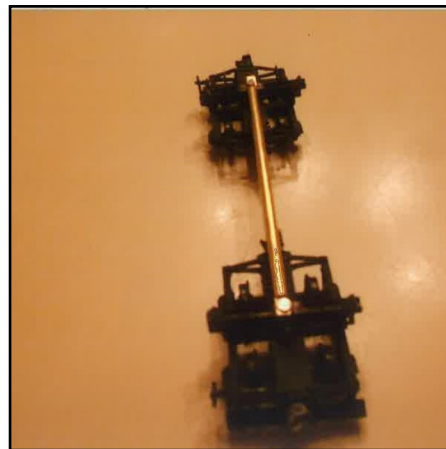
Next, I took some 1/8 inch brass rod and cut it to 3 inch lengths. I then drilled a .037 hole at about a 1/8 of an inch from each end of the brass rod. Small wire brads were placed in each hole, to replicate kingpins. At the same time I drilled out the bolsters and trucks for the brad nails. With that done, I took a Dremel and



ground down the brass rod about halfway where I had drilled the hole. The reason for the grinding is, I

didn't want the nails heads any bigger than what the rod was.

Next, I took some JB Weld and put a dab on the bolsters where the kingpins were drilled. I lined up the holes in the bolsters with the holes drilled in the brass rods and pressed them together while holding them in place with round toothpicks inserted in the holes. After the JB Weld had cured, I snapped off the toothpicks and re-drilled the holes. I then put the nails into the assembly and then mounted it to the trucks, making sure there was only about 1/8 inch of the nails sticking through the bottom of the



truck. Then applied a small amount of JB Weld on the underside of the truck where the nails were sticking through and let it cure.

When that had dried, I took three of the honey-suckle branches that I cut, stacked in a triangle shape on the car and glued them into place. Finally, I cut some HO scale chain to length that was needed to reach over the logs and to the end of the bolsters. JB Welded the chains to the



end of the bolsters and had my log car.

The question I have is, are these still disconnected trucks or is this a skeleton car?

All photos submitted by Tim Linn

Upcoming Contest Information

SPRING 2021 PLD CONTESTS

1. PAINT YOUR BOX CAR. (THESE WERE HANDED OUT AT 2019 FALL MEET)*
2. DIORAMA (NO LARGER THAN 12"X 12" AND MUST HAVE AT LEAST 1 TRACK)
3. STRUCTURES
4. DIESEL (FALLEN FLAG SCHEME: MILWAUKEE ROAD, CNW, GN, CB&Q, IC OR CC or ICG)
5. ROLLING STOCK
6. STEAM LOCOMOTIVE (FALLEN FLAG SCHEME: SAME AS DIESEL CRITERIA)

If you were unable to be at the 2019 fall meet, and would like a car for the contest, Denny will have a few extra cars that can be ordered from him. Please contact him directly at: 605-359-8921 OR cowl@premieronline.net

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Upcoming Events

Upcoming events (*All these events are subject to change so check before heading to the events*)

The Cosmopolitan Club's Annual Show
March 13-14 2021
485 E 5th St.
South Sioux City, NE

TLR Convention
May 20 -23 2021
Bismarck, ND

PLD Spring Event
May 1, 2021
Sibley, Iowa

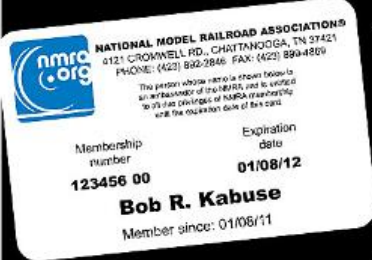
NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

If you have anything you would like included in the upcoming Journal or added to the PLD website, please contact me at:
jdandice22c@hotmail.com

Railroad Trivia

Abraham Lincoln's assassination helped publicize train travel. George Pullman, who had made a name for himself during the 1850s as a self-trained engineer and building mover in Chicago, began tinkering with the idea of a comfortable railroad "sleeping car" after a particularly uncomfortable train ride in upstate New York. By 1863, he had produced his first two models, the Pioneer and the Springfield, named for the Illinois hometown of then-President Abraham Lincoln. Pullman's cars were indeed comfortable, but they were also prohibitively expensive and few railroad companies were interested in leasing them—until President Lincoln's assassination in April 1865. After Lincoln's death, a Pullman car was used as part of the cortege that travelled through several Northern cities before returning his body to Illinois. The funeral train was front-page news, and when Pullman also temporarily loaned one of his beautiful sleeper cars to a grief-stricken Mary Todd Lincoln, the publicity poured in. Two years later, he established the Pullman Palace Car Company, which would revolutionize train travel around the world. Curiously enough, when Pullman died in 1897, his replacement as head of the company was none other than Robert Todd Lincoln, the slain president's eldest son.

From History.com



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