

Texas Western STAR

Vol. 30, No. 5, November 2024



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The Texas Western STAR



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**12-5-2024 – December 2024 TWMRC Business Meeting
TWRA Board of Directors Election
TWMRC “Engineer of the Year” voting**

12-7-2024 - TWMRC Family Christmas Dinner and gift exchange. 5:00 PM - ??

**12-14-2024 – TWMRC Forest Hill City Open House.
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

CORRECTION:

**1-4-2025 – TWRA BoD Installation Dinner, Spring Creek BBQ, 3608 So. Cooper St., Arlington, TX. 76017.
<https://www.springcreekbarbeque.com/arlington>**

2024 Board of Directors

**Chief Executive Officer: David Crumpton
Chief Operating Officer: Darrell Cowles
Chief Administrative Officer: Jay Waters**

**Chief Financial Officer: Robert Rathgeber
Chief Development Officer: Chris Mahan**

Work Crews

Scenery/Structures:

- Terry Morris
- Steve Parish
- Chris Mahan
- Mike Weiss
- Russel & Deb Gifford

Rolling Stock Inspection:

- Terry Morris
- Jim Archer

Track & Roadbed/MOW:

- Clarence Zink
- Darrell Cowles
- Jay Waters

DCC Programming:

- Steve Parish
- Cameron Pantke
- Thomas Stephens

Electrical Crew:

- Don Hays
- David Crumpton

Operations Crew:

- Clarence Zink
- Stu Sibitzky
- Jeff Cornelius
- Terry Morris

- Two important elections are coming up at the 5th of TWMRC December Business Meeting:
 - ❖ TWRA Board of Directors election. Nominees are:
 - Chief Executive Officer: David Crumpton
 - Chief Operating Officer: Darrell Cowles
 - Chief Administrative Officer: Jay Waters
 - Chief Financial Officer: Robert Rathgeber
 - Chief Development Officer: Chris Mahan
 - Additional nominees for any of the above positions will be accepted at the December 5th meeting.
 - After any other nominees are accepted, voting will take place.
 - ❖ The 2024 **Don Hamilton *Engineer of the Year Award*** silent election.
 - The **Engineer of the Year** award is meant to commend one club member who made a significant contribution to the club during the previous year through their efforts of track laying, electrical work, structure building, scenery creation, volunteering, service to the club, helping other members, promoting the club to visitors, showing our new members how to do things, or assisting with various modeling jobs like soldering, installing tortoise machines, or sharing their knowledge of the railroad history of our 7 railroads we model in our era. Donovan Pantke was the 2023 winner of the Engineer of the Year award for his work on creating the LCC signaling and detection system we continue to use.

CEO's Business Car

David Crumpton

Hello from the CEO Business car! This has been a fantastic year for the club and the layout. We are blessed with new members who are really making an impact. New members are the life blood of any club or organization. When they come in with significant skill and talent, it is indeed a gift to the club that is much appreciated and recognized. Progress on the layout and the changes we have seen this past year are being noticed by our visitors and they are awed by what they see. I get very positive comments all the time and it is rewarding to know that your hard work is recognized for its high quality. Our financial standing has never, in the history of the club, been as sound as what it is right now. We have been blessed with donations that have earned us significant money. Train shows and garage sales have also been very profitable for us, along with private donations from friends that love our club and want to see us grow and succeed. If you could see my face, it has a huge smile on it and my chest is popping off buttons right now! You all are fantastic and I am very proud to be a part of the TWMRC team.

Next, for some new additions. If you have been noticing progress in the Port, you will see the addition of a Harbor Masters building down from French's Fishery. Gulf Shrimp Co. is new and is located at the far left end of Palitti Harbor. Pendleton Marine is new and is located just past the paved road to the back of the scene. There is more coming! I am working on a set of structures called Red Herring Packing Co.

Since there are no herring caught at the gulf coast of Texas, it will be re-named Red Snapper Packing Co. It is a very robust set of structures and I have placed white cards to denote where the structures will sit next to French's Fishery.

The structures below were bought by Jim Archer from Lorrie Palitti at a recent garage sale at her home. They were built by Leo and Lorrie Palitti and I am excited to have them find a home on our layout. Jim graciously donated them to me for the harbor. They will be lighted and will sit just to the right of the Gulf Shimp Co. Holes have been drilled and plastic soda straws have already been installed to enhance the drop of the electrical wire for lighting. In the picture below, you will see Gulf Charters on the left. I have built a walkway around it and will install a railing so that visitors don't fall into the harbor. Rhysa's Bay Side Grocery will also get a railing.

As we close out 2024, I pray for all of you to have a very safe and happy Holiday Season. May you all be surrounded by friends and family and celebrate a wonderful Thanksgiving Day. Remember to be thankful with all your heart. As we move into December and closer to Christmas, please travel safely and take time to remember the reason for the Season! Jesus Christ is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. May he bless us with a fantastic and healthy 2025. God bless all of you, my friends.



Leo and Lorrie Palitti structures donated by Jim Archer for the Palitti Bay scene.

COO Off & Away

Darrell Cowles

Tis the Season...

We at the Texas Western love trains of all types, sizes and gauges year-round. For many of us, our first train was purchased and delivered by Santa Claus sometime during the night about this time of year. And if the pattern holds, your dad was the General Manager of the railroad from the start; you were an engineer. Which was what you wanted anyway! Initial expansion involved a sheet of plywood most likely, and was either stored under your bed or out in the garage. Expansion is needed for railroads to survive and be competitive, something you had to explain to the Chief Financial Officer, Mom. Mine was in our garage, and involved the ubiquitous loop, with a passing siding and one spur track. Dad built a small mountain on one corner of the layout using some perforated sheet aluminum stock and plaster. We had to add a sawhorse to that corner; mountains are heavy. I still have the Lionel Texas Special on a shelf in my office, so I can look at it and remember the joy of that Christmas.

I suspect that is part of the reason model (or toy) trains are so popular at Christmas; model train manufacturers advertised heavily and almost every large department store in town had a model train layout running.

Some were in windows on the street, I remember Leonard's Department store always had a large Lionel display running with an animated Santa standing watch. Inside they had another display, plus they set up Leonard's Toy Land every year in one area, which had an overhead monorail for children to ride in. After speaking with Santa about wishes, we slid down a slide to our waiting parents and Rudolph (animated) dispensed a small candy.

As we open our doors to the public during Open House December 14th, I ask every TWMRC member to help our visitors experience the joy and connection model trains have with Christmas. Some may experience it for the first time! This is our opportunity to influence young people with the joy of model trains, and bring memories back for the older "kids". These may one day become a member of the Texas Western, so talk to them and make them feel welcome!

Merry Christmas and All Aboard!
Darrell Cowles

- Monorail in downtown Fort Worth's Leonard's Department store.



The CAO Observation Car

Jay Waters, TWMRC CAO

Where has 2024 gone? I can't believe the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are already here. We had a large group in attendance for our Club Family Thanksgiving Dinner and bingo sessions. Everyone ate too much and had a great time. If you missed that gathering, you have another opportunity to join us for our TWMRC Family Christmas Dinner and gift exchange. This event has always been a load of fun. We hope you and your family can join us on December 7 at 5:00. The club is providing the BBQ dinner and drinks. Feel free to bring a dessert to share with everyone. Men bring a men's gift and women bring a women's gift to exchange. Gift value should be in the \$25 to \$40 range and wrapped or in a gift bag.

Another Club event in December is our annual Christmas Open House on Saturday, December 14 at noon. We will need every member to help us get ready to host visitors that day, so please watch for requests for assistance. This is a very important outreach to the City of Forest Hill. We always have visitors from the City Council, including the mayor, as well as the FH Fire and Police Departments. Our Open House is an opportunity to show off our Club and thank the City for their support. Please mark your calendar and be there to help.

My last item to address is the upcoming Board of Directors nominations. Our Club has been blessed to have various members step up and serve on the Board of Directors over the years. The tasks required of the Board members are not difficult. If you are interested in running for one of the BoD positions, feel free to ask anyone on the BoD what the duties entail and then throw your name in the hat. We will open nominations again at the December Business Meeting and will then cast our votes for the 2025 BoD.

I hope to see you all at the Club soon!!
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!!!

Jay H2Os

NEW MEMBER Thomas Peppers, aka. “Peppers” was voted in during the September business meeting. Tom has a home layout with several great scenes, and has been working with our Development Team to repair locomotives to be included in complete “train sets” available at the TWMRC sales table at train shows.



The Ore Car

Clarence Zink, Texas STAR Editor/Publisher

The end of the year is upon us faster than I anticipated. Leaves have finally started falling from the trees, cold (?) weather - OK, milder weather - has arrived, and the holiday parties have started. But it has been a good year for the Texas Western. We've been somewhat more than "inching" forward making progress.

Trackwork wise, the last 3 track projects are the MKT Engine Facility, the East Texas Timber Syndicate (ETTS) Sawmill, and Pantke Coke and Chemical. Virtually all other track for Phase 1 has been laid.

The harbor area is coming along well thanks to David.

We've now got all three grain elevators completed by Mike G. and James F. For purposes of "location recognition" in our JMRI operating scheme, the area between the two elevators opposite each other on the north-south tracks – ATSF, MKT, & SP – along the aisle, is dubbed "Elevator Canyon". It certainly reminds *me* of a deep, dark, narrow place with high cliff walls.

And Darrell's work on Tower 55 is fabulous. What a great and iconic scene!

Our efforts at building an operating plan in JMRI have been fruitful. We successfully held 4 operating "sessions" during October and November. Following is a brief review the JMRI operating plan:

- We started with operations centered on the Lone Star Steel mill. There is a LOT of traffic in and out of that facility.
- Raw materials into the plant are broken into pairs of days:
 - Iron ore loads move in on Monday and Thursday afternoons, while limestone empties move out in the mornings to make room for iron ore.
 - Coke loads move in on Tuesday and Friday after the iron ore loads have departed the mill.
 - Limestone loads from Gulf Sand and Gravel go up to the ore bins on Wednesday and Saturday once Coke empties are headed back to Pantke Coke & Chemical.
- Steel products move out on a similar basis, except only three times per week instead of 6. The Lone Star Steel mill ships:

The Ore Car

Clarence Zink, Texas STAR Editor/Publisher

- Various sizes and types of oilfield drill pipe, well casing, pipeline pipe, and semi-finished tool joints to handlers and finishers in the Houston area.
- Coiled steel to a automobile frame manufacturer in the Houston area, and to the Arlington GM Plant.
- Crushed Slag to ?? via the Gulf Sand & Gravel site., where it is exchanged for limestone flux for the blast furnace.
- Steel mill supplies and other materials currently go to Frisco's 8th Street Yard for distribution to their sources.
- Finally, grain is being exported from the Kimbell, Bailey, and Producers Grain elevators to sites "off layout" in staging.

So far, we've ran one 24 hour "railroad day", a 'Tuesday'.

But being that it's the start of the "Holiday Season" with people making family plans, and because we've found many "issues" with turnouts, track, and track power, I'd like to suspend "operations" until mid January, to allow us to resolve issues, and add additional trains to our operating system. We should be able to restart operations and **have MORE FUN!**

The best to everyone and their families.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Be safe and stay healthy.

Clarence



Stu S. moving Coke empties from N-S Staging to LSS main yard.



Jeff C. pushing ore loads up to Blast Furnace bins.

Mike Weiss on:

A Non-rectangular Kit-bashed Building

Several years ago I purchased background photographs of buildings, many of which I liked. One in particular was a brick building with faded white paint (photo 1). Using DPM modular wall sections I made a two sided model that captures the feel of that photograph. Roof detail includes small stacks, ventilation fans, plumbing vent and roof hatch. Photos 2 and 3 show the modeled structure.

On my layout at the time I planned to run a siding along the long side and a street on the short side of the structure. I hope to be able to incorporate this in the switching layout I am now planning.

1



Quite a railroad facing facade, that's for sure!

Mike's kit-bashed structure:



Travels With John –

by John Garfield

I'm going to break my summer trip to the Smokey Mountains and my train rides there into three parts, two will be train excursions and one will just be about the Smokey Mountain National Park visit. I think all three are pretty interesting.

So, to begin, our first visit is to Knoxville, Tenn. where we had a great B&B stay pictured here. This was a great B&B that I would highly recommend.



It is fairly new but very welcoming.



They gave us a very nice suit, that we didn't ask for, overlooking the rear property.

But lets get onto the train stuff. On the evening of our arrival we had tickets on the Smokey Mountaineer out of Knoxville. This was an OK ride but not very picturest. We went down to the station early to get some pictures, then onto the rebuilt train station for our tickets. There we took a few photos of passenger cars, trail equipment and freight cars sitting the yard.



Then it was off to get our tickets.



The lobby had a few engines on display too.





Then it was onto the train. We reserved a special car where the Pullman sleeping quarters were above our dining table. While I cannot say much for the trip itself, the meal was very good and well served by the staff. Scenery was not real good.

We basically traveled south following the valley but there were a few highlights. One was the cemetery for Veterans that had an unusual stone. The sun was setting so the picture is not as bright as one would want, but if you look close, the large center monument has an **iron steam engine** on top of it.



The next day we took the trolley up the mountain.





That was interesting and very steep.

But the view of Knoxville was great from the top.



That evening we took a river cruise that was very disappointing, so I won't cover that. Next issue will not be about trains but will feature our visit to the mountains, which was very interesting to me.

Coming Events:

- ❖ 12-14-2024 – **Division 1 Christmas Party.** Forest Hill Community Center, [6901 Wichita Street, Forest Hill, TX 76140](https://www.google.com/maps/place/6901+Wichita+Street,+Forest+Hill,+TX+76140) [[view map](#)]
- ❖ 1/18 & 19/2025 – **Plano Winter Train Show,** Plano Center, Spring Creek Parkway, Plano, Tx. <https://www.dfwtrainshows.com/>
- ❖ 2-15-2025 – **Houston Train Show**
San Jacinto Model Railroad Club
<https://sanjacmodeltrains.org/GHTS.php>
- ❖ 6/26 – 6/29/2025 - **73rd Lone Star Region Convention,**
Holiday Inn South, 9990 Airline Hwy, Baton Rouge,
Louisiana, 70816 phone 855-516-1090
No Convention Website info yet
- ❖ 7/14 – 19/2025 **STATION No. VI, 2025 NMRA National Convention** <https://nmra2025.com/>

For Sale:

2 - B&O Diesel Locomotives with sound/motion/lights decoders.
See at TWMRC building. Contact John Garfield.