



November 2016, Houston Area Live Steamers, Volume 2016 Issue 11, Rick White, Editor

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Upcoming HALS Events

Date	Description (All activities at Zube Park unless otherwise indicated)
December 2016	
03 December	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
12 December	Board Meeting (07:00 PM) at Zube Park (Optional)
January 2017	
January 7	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
January 21	Work Day
January 23	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
January 28	OPS Day 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM
February 2017	
February 4	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
February 18	HALS at Greater Houston Train Show
February 20	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
February 23-25	Chugga Chugga Chili Fest

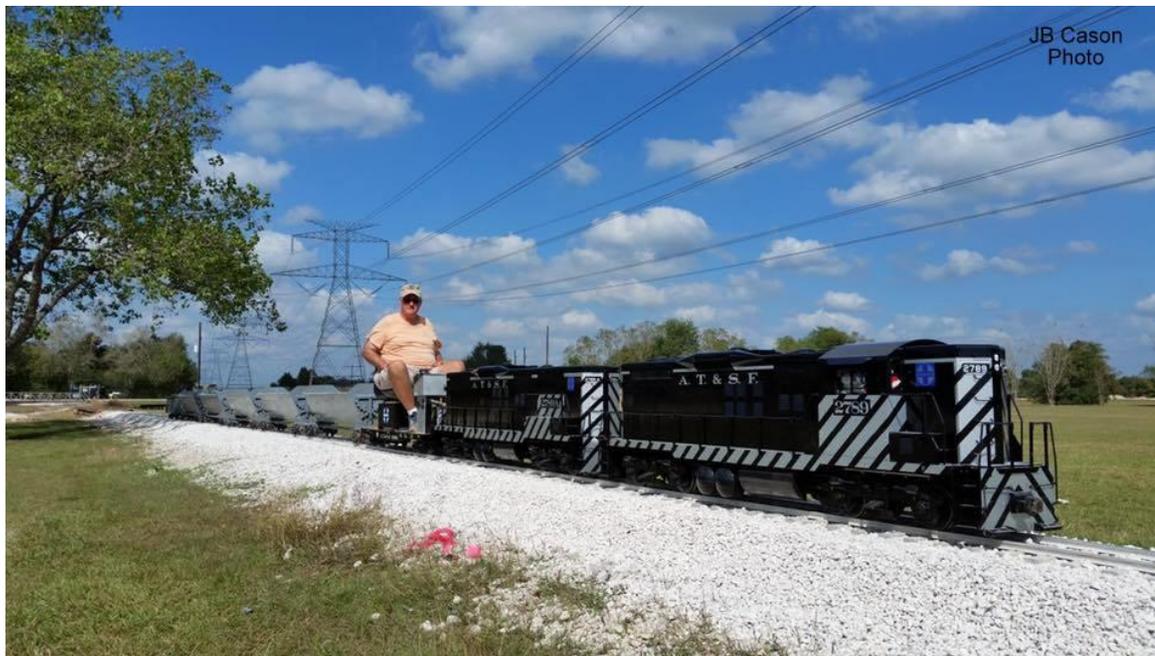
March 2017	
March 4	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
March 11	Work Day, prepare for public run day.
March 18	Public Run Day 9 AM to 2 PM
March 25	OPS Day
March 27	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
April 2017	
April 1	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
April 15	Public Run Day 9 AM to 2 PM
April 24	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
May 2017	
May 6	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
May 20	Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
May 22	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
May 25-28	Memorial Day Weekend Meet.

Work Day

October 31, 2016

Gary Brothers and JB Cason

Today, Peder Serkland, JB Cason, and I did more fine tuning on the section of track from Black's Crossing to Sand Springs. I replaced some rotten ties in the curve between Sand Springs and Lakeside Jct, which required quite a bit of track re-gauging. Then ballast was applied, after which it was leveled side to side and then tamped. Peder used his track leveling car. After that he dressed the ballast on the sides. All speed restrictions have now been lifted. JB ran ballast a ballast train using side dump cars.



JB Cason with his ballast train and the HALS side dump cars.



Ballast train today. Between Sand Springs and Lakeside Jct. Peder Serkland removing ballast from the ballast cars.

Two photos above: JB Cason.

Six photos below: Gary Brothers.



New ballast on the curve from Lakeside Jct. to Sand Springs.



Leveling track at Sand Springs.



Peder Serkland grooming the ballast at Sand Springs.



The groomed track between Sand Springs and Black's Crossing.



Sand Springs after ballasting and aligning track.



Peder Serkland at Sand Springs

25th Anniversary Meet, Thursday, November 10, 2016, Photos by Rick White



Spence Gaskin's Frankie, Gary Brothers # 5159, and Bill Bryan's # 10.



Don Saager (see <http://americanprofile.com/articles/steam-engine-enthusiast/>) at Caliente with his Mikado.



JB Cason polishing his Titan Junior loco. Spence Gaskin walking towards the camera.



Rolland Boutwell coming into the station.

On-Time Competition
 You always need to be on-time at the train station. This is a timed event to test how well you can maintain a predetermined set speed around a closed loop.
 Just how well do you know your speed?
 When: Friday at 2:00 pm (changed from 10:00 am to allow more people to compete.)
 Where: Look for signs out from Cypress Station
 How: Pass through starting line and make complete loop back to Start/Finish Line. Your time will be recorded and results released at the Saturday Dinner.

All tracks will be closed from 30 minutes before competition to after last competitor.

Anniversary Parade
 Be part of the parade. Show us what you got.
 Decorate your train and hook up all your cars.
 Or come watch all the trains pass by and cheer them on.
 When: Saturday at 3:00 pm
 Where: Parade will form up at Caliente Station.
 How: Parade will make one complete loop via public run day route. All trains should attempt to maintain a safe distance between trains but follow as closely as safely possible running at 3 mph until past Lakeside Junction

All tracks will be closed from 30 minutes before the parade to after the last train finishes the loop.

25th Anniversary Meet, Friday, November 11, 2016, Photos by Rick White



JB Cason and remote control engineer Danny Click.



Spence Gaskin with LNR 13 at Black's Crossing. Head down.



Engineer Greg Moore leaving the yard with three generations of Canfields: Ron, Jonathan, and Andrew



Three generations of Canfields, Ron, Jonathan, and Andrew.



From Jackson Tower, a Ron Canfield photo with title "picture of the guy not usually seen". Rick White and Greg Moore.



Greg Moore coming into the station with the Canfields: Ron, Jonathan, and Andrew



Spence Gaskin with LNR 13 arriving at the station, head still down in the fire box.



JT Bailey and Spence Gaskin. JT has his phone out, looking for a GPS app to get his 4 mph.



John Carroll Enders is the engineer with passengers Becky Enders and Carolyn Balkum



Becky Enders and Carolyn Balkum



Don Saager with his Mikado.



Shane Murphy

“On Time” Event: 4.00 mph goal



Timed event, Bob Barnett is first to go, but with a speed of **3.81** mph, slowest of the day.



Gary Brothers is second to go, and has a speed of **4.78** mph, fastest of the day.



JB Cason was third to run, with a speed of **4.20** mph.



Shane Murphy was fourth to run, with a speed of **4.16** mph.



Fifth to run was Greg Moore, with a speed of **3.87** mph.



Gilbert Freitag was sixth to run the timed event, with a speed of **4.02** mph and **won**, closest to 4.00 mph.



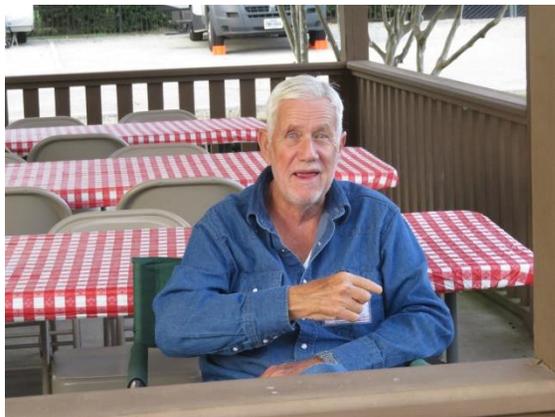
JT Bailey entering the station.



Remote control engineer Danny Click with passenger Gilbert Freitag.



Brittany Click riding the dining car.



Gary McCoy



Donna and Pete Greene



Donna and Pete Greene

25th Anniversary Meet, Saturday, November 12, 2016, Photos by Rick White



Doug Blodgett wearing a coat and running a steam loco, an ideal cool morning. The low sun lets us see the drivers.



Richard Osborn got his new loco this far when the power to the whole park went out for 2.5 hours.



Danny Click starting his morning ride.



Scott Weatherford



Cindy Tooley with Scott Weatherford



Stephen Balkum with his uncle John Carroll Enders



Kari Wirth, her Aunt, and the Gaskins



Bob Barnett with his T&P 502



Gilbert Freitag with a game camera on the right of the Cabin Creek sign



Richard Osborn finally got his new loco off the transfer table



Danny Click



Dan Saager and Mike Hales



ABOVE: JT Bailey with his 4-6-2



Clyde Brown



Stephen Balkum on his mother's loco



Pat Darby (engineer) and Phil Carter



Don Saager and Doug Blodgett with Don's 2" scale Mikado that Doug found easy to run.



Engineer Virginia Freitag with Gil Freitag, Bob Barnett, and Gilbert Freitag.



John Frank and Gerald Lee



Don Saager and Doug Blodgett with Don's narrow gauge Mikado



Tomas Sandoval IV and V with Amelia and Erin Sandoval



JB Cason



Engineer Carolyn Balkum with John Carroll Enders



Kari Wirth with her Aunt and Dene & Jim Anderson



Engineer John Oglesby and David McBride



Bob Barnett, Gil Freitag, Virginia Freitag, and Gilbert Freitag



Sandoval Train



Bill & Jori Bryan



EZ Goin running JB Cason's train.



Spence & Stephanie Gaskin



Donna Greene on the Greene's Mikado

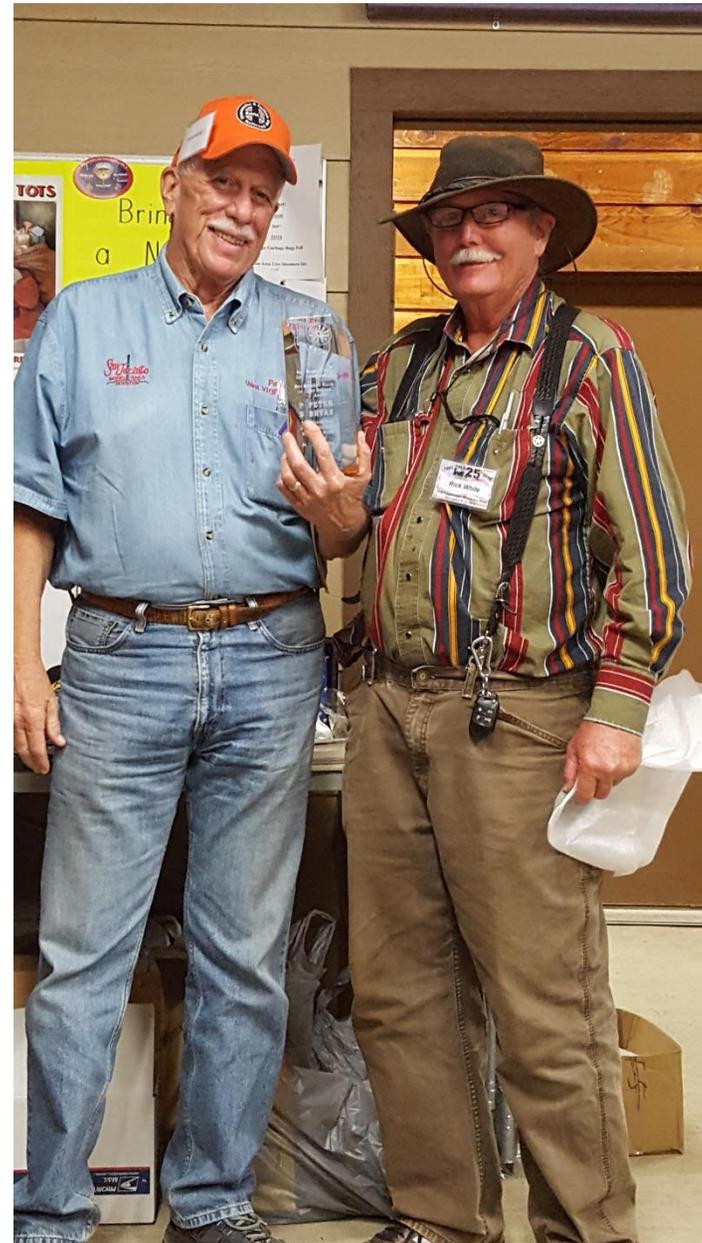


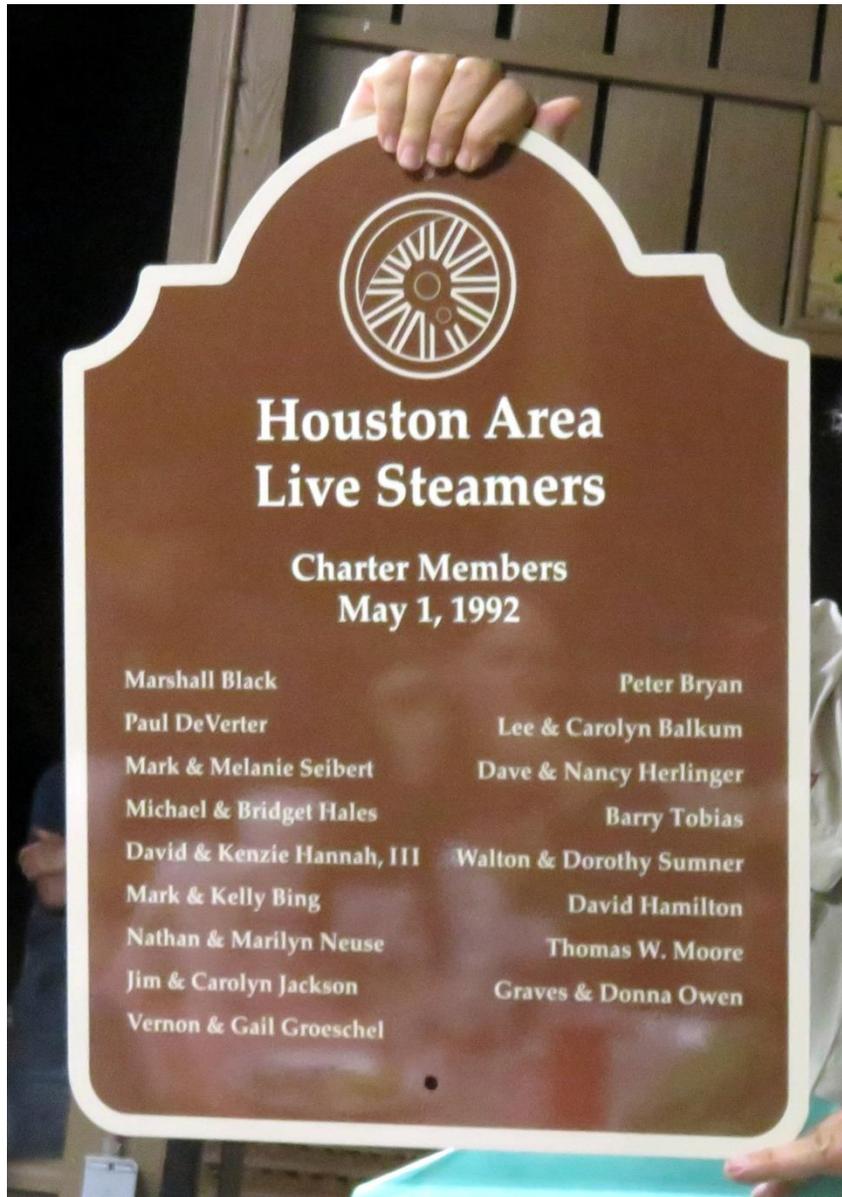
Danny Click, Susan Bryan, and Brittany Click



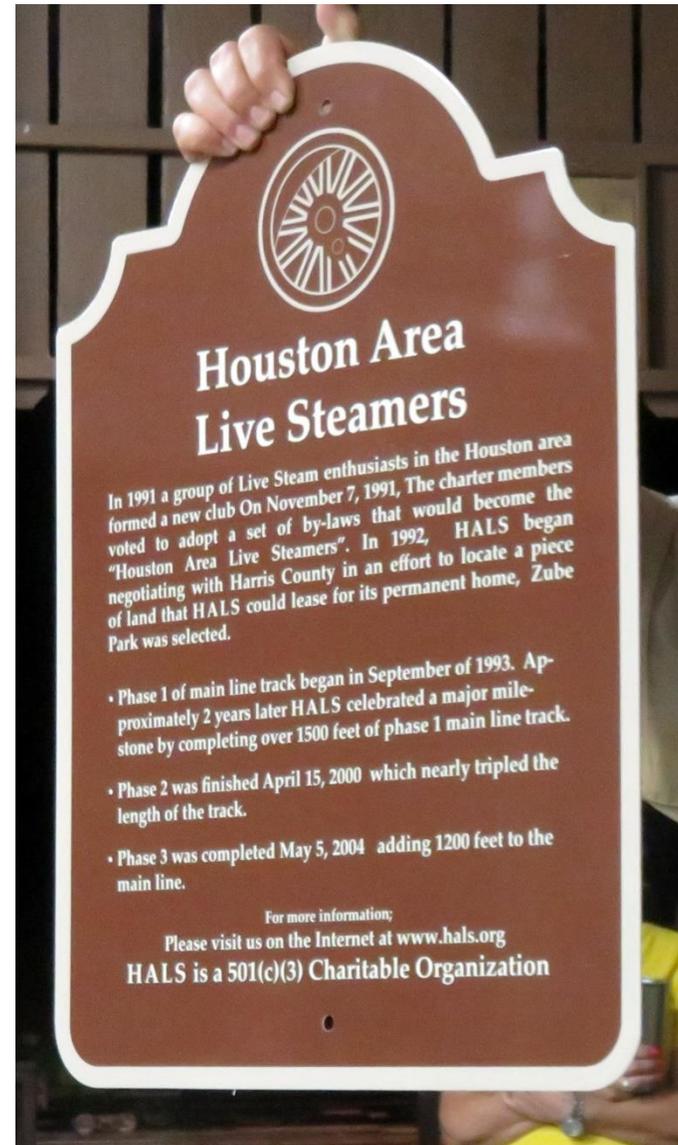
Above: Peter Bryan with the Freitag train.

Right: Susan Bryan photo. Peter Bryan received the 2015 Marshall Black / Lee Balkum award last year and this is his first appearance at the track since then. Rick White is handing out the award.





Greg Moore's Charter Member sign



Greg Moore's History of HALS sign



Gary Brothers receiving the 2016 Marshall Black / Lee Balkum award from Rick White

**25th Anniversary Meet
November 12, 2016
Spence Gaskin**



Saturday Morning started with the power going out for more than three hours. A couple of steamers had gotten an early start, but the rest were stuck unable to fire up without the aid of compressed air or a fan. "The Beast" came out to help, providing power to get four more steamers out on the track. The portable air compressor up front is running hard.



Power for fans and air compressor.



Gilbert Freitag asks about Don Saager & Chama's engine.



John Carroll Enders, Carolyn Balkum, and JT Bailey



The power went out while unloading...no other way to power the transfer table... Gary Brothers, Richard Osborn, Ken Rhodes, and Roy Tomlin



Above: Gilbert Freitag
Right: Richard Osborn



Stephanie Gaskin and Danny Click



Kari Wirth



Bill Bryan



Steve Campa



Gil & Virginia Freitag



Erin Sandoval and Clyde Brown



Steve & Ester Campa



Dan Saager and Doug Blodgett



Tomas & Erin Sandoval with
Stephanie Gaskin



Ron Pasley, Bill Smith, and Shane
Murphy



Virginia & Gil Freitag, Bob
Barnett, and Gilbert Freitag



Stephanie Gaskin, Bill & Jori
Bryan



Stephanie Gaskin, Don Saager,
and Shane Murphy



JT Bailey



Bob Barnett, Greg Moore, and Bill Smith waiting on the parade to start



Carolyn Balkum, Stephen Balkum, and Peter Bryan



John Carroll Enders and Barry Tobias



Virginia & Gil Freitag with Gilbert Freitag



Spence Gaskin. Photo by Stephanie Gaskin



The Sandoval Train with engineer Tomas followed by Erin Sandoval and friends



Clyde Brown with Cody Crawford



Dana Moore, Bob Meyer, and Greg Moore



Peter Bryan receiving his 2015 Marshall Black / Lee Balkum award from Rick White



Gary & Linda Brothers. Gary received the 2016 Marshall Black / Lee Balkum Award from HALS.

HEY! WE EXIST!
HOUSTON AREA LIVE STEAMERS was born November 7, 1991!

Thanks to pioneers - Jim Jackson, David Hannah, Nathan Neuse, Mark Seibert and Vah Sumner (Apologies to anyone omitted, Ed.) - the HOUSTON AREA LIVE STEAMERS achieved official existence with the adoption of bylaws at its final formation meeting on November 7, 1991.

The Formation Committee presented the proposed By Laws for a second reading and the adoption vote was unanimous. Also by unanimous vote, HALS first slate of officers and directors were elected. Those elected are: President Mark Seibert, Vice President - Administration Jim Jackson, Vice President - Operations

HALS Logo

 Designed by Melanie Seibert.

**First Annual Christmas Social!
 THE GANDY DANCER'S BALL**
 WHEN: December 14, 1991
 7:00 P.M. sharp
 WHERE: See Map at left
 WHAT: Catered Bar-B-Q and fellowship
 DRESS: Casual
 COST: \$10.00 ea. includes half rental, meat, etc. BYOB
 RSVP: Mark Seibert 469-3830
 Jim Jackson 466-8356 by 12/11/91 please.
 See You There!

Greenridge & Western Railroad Open House Is Grand Success!
 Nathan and Marilyn Neuse; Edgar Neuse; Marshall Black; Lee and Carolyn Balkum; Jim Jackson; Mark Bing; Cody Crawford; Gordon Bauman; Mike Montross; Joe Thompson; Dave Herlinger; and, David Hannah (provided rolling stock). If I have forgotten anyone I apologize. I was in a state of shock during most of the day. I never dreamed that we would have such an attendance.

The Seiberts put the GARR on the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club's agenda near for November. HALS members readily enjoyed the fried chicken lunch. Ed.

by Mark Seibert
 Melanie and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you that helped make our open house on the 9th such a success. Several hundred people visited the track in the three and a half hours that we were open. We had five trains running the entire time and I think everyone who visited had several rides. Apparently the most fascinating thing that we did, other than run steam engines, was when we turned the locomotives on the turn table. That was a real crowd pleaser. I think this event proved that we like club can handle a large group of people safely and have them all go away happy and fascinated with the aspect of the model railroading hobby.

We gave away all the flyers Jim Jackson had made and had many requests for more information. Hopefully out there in the mass of people that came will be someone like we were at one time; on the verge of starting in the hobby and just needing one ride or one whiff of coal smoke to get them going.

The initial purpose of this article was to thank all who helped with the open house and I have discovered, as here they are:

First and foremost try with, Melanie, for putting up with me;

The first Stack Talk

Stack Talk
 The monthly newsletter of the Houston Area Live Steamers
 Editor/Publisher: Lee Balkum
 Volume 1, Issue 1
 December 1, 1991

EDITORIAL OFFICES:
 3818 East Elm Circle
 Katy, TX 77493

Next Meeting: 7:00 P.M. December 5, 1991
Location: Bear Creek Community Center

MASTER PLAN continued...
 Step One: Define accountability. "How do we know if we are getting there efficiently?" In conducting the planning process, we need to be aware the problems could arise along the way. Here are five critical elements that could affect the planning process.

1. It will always take longer than we think. We need to set our expectations wisely. Some. Take small steps along the way to give ourselves little victories and the feeling of accomplishment.
2. Everyone means everything here. We need to give everyone our best. The membership met on the 11th of November. It was a Master Plan, and it requires our communication.
3. There will be delays and setbacks of any nature when we set out. We need to get on for the future.
4. Persistence. The feeling that we cannot do it and not enough people to do what needs to be done, so we don't get anything. Start a small project.
5. Inspiration. We are not perfect. We are going to make mistakes. The Board will make mistakes. We're human. The members said we need more information and appreciation of what's been done. We need to remember that we are all trying to do our best. It does not mean what we expect, but each person is doing the best they can. We need to respect their contribution.
6. It is time for us to look at where we want to go. The best track is ahead of us. The secret is just the beginning. The next two articles will consider the issues of maintenance and communication.

The preceding article was furnished by Senior Director Marshall Black. Marshall thought this article, appearing in the LALS newsletter, was very timely for HALS consideration. We agree. Thanks, Pam Dring and LALS. Ed.

CHARTER MEMBERS TO DATE
 Lee & Carolyn Balkum
 Mark & Kelly Bing
 Marshall Black
 Peter Bryan
 Vernon & Gail Groeschel
 Michael & Bridget Hales
 David & Kenzie Hannah, III
 Lee & Carolyn Jackson
 Thomas W. Moore
 Nathan & Marilyn Neuse
 Curtis & Donna Owen
 Mark & Melanie Seibert
 Walter & Dorothy Sumner
 Barry Tobias

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS TO DATE
 Ron Baker
 Joe Phipps
 Steve Patten
 Mike Henry

MASTER PLANNING: WHAT DO WE WANT TO GET TO THE END?

1. What does it mean to set a hobby or a collection of the P&H?
2. Can we be both and not lose our enjoyment?
3. What criteria do we follow to decide what projects to take, big, or small?
4. Does what the membership want for LALS conflict or coincide with what the P&H and P&H want from LALS?
5. How do we maintain what we have?
6. How do we manage the growth and care of our membership?
7. How can LALS fulfill the dreams of its membership?
8. How can we maintain our enjoyment?
9. How do we know whether we are meeting our goals or not?

A Possible Mission Statement
 "The purpose of LALS is to support the members in fulfilling their dream of working on a railroad, owning a railroad, or running an engine. The focus is not 'what can we get from the railroad, but what can LALS give to the members. LALS provides the supporting services to meet those dreams, whether it encompasses essential facilities, or an experience, or the people members, or an opportunity that has been provided. To achieve this mission, open communication or being transparent to the Board and its members must be a priority. The Board of Directors handles the coordination of the members' dreams, by supporting each member in fulfilling their dreams, not by telling us."

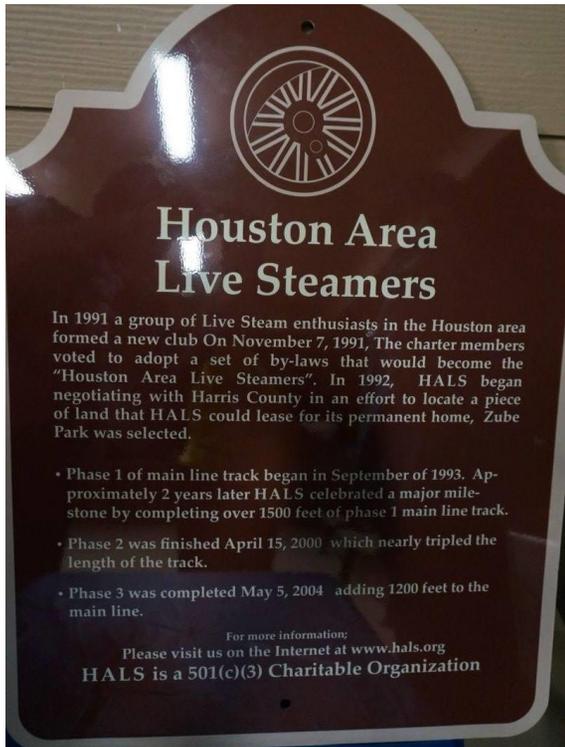
The Master Plan Process
 There are six steps to a Master Plan Process:
 Step One: Agree on a Mission Statement to answer the question, "Why are we here?"
 Step Two: Define our goals to answer, "What do we want to be and by when?"
 Step Three: Assess, "Where are we now?"
 Step Four: Describe a plan to answer "What do we need to do with what we have?"
 Step Five: Describe an action plan to answer, "How do we get there?"

The first Stack Talk, only two pages and no photos.

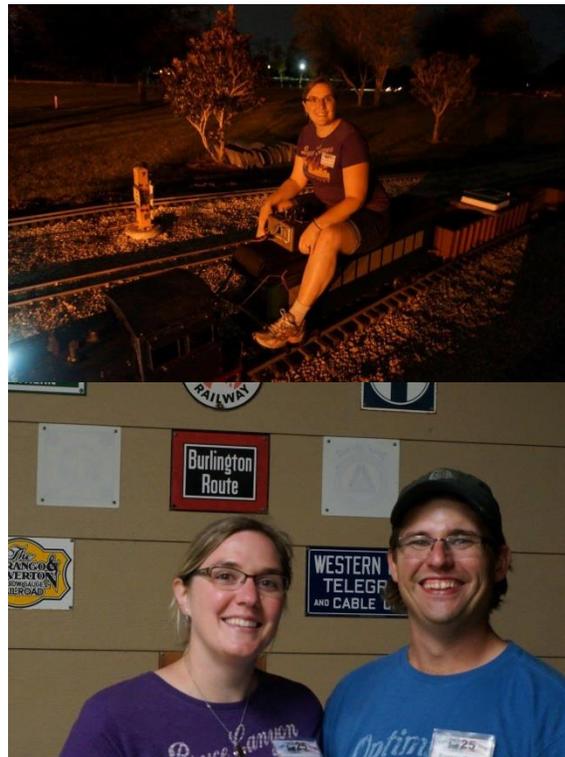
Houston Area Live Steamers
 Charter Members
 May 1, 1992

Marshall Black	Peter Bryan
Paul DeVerter	Lee & Carolyn Balkum
Mark & Melanie Seibert	Dave & Nancy Herlinger
Michael & Bridget Hales	Barry Tobias
David & Kenzie Hannah, III	Walter & Dorothy Sumner
Mark & Kelly Bing	David Hamilton
Nathan & Marilyn Neuse	Thomas W. Moore
Jim & Carolyn Jackson	Graves & Donna Owen
Vernon & Gail Groeschel	

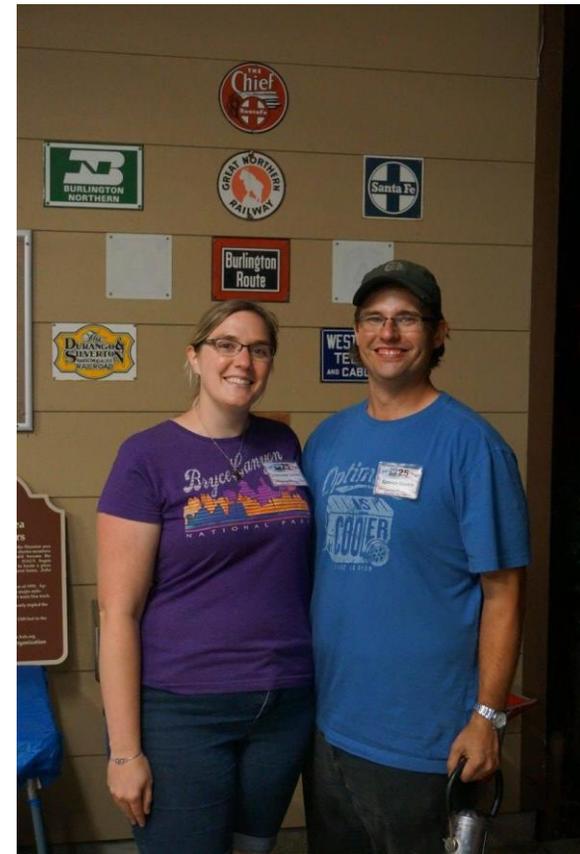
HALS Charter Members



HALS History



The Gaskins



Stephanie & Spence Gaskin

25th Anniversary Meet Summary by Greg Moore

On the sign-in from for registration we had 99 names.

I know 3 people that did not sign in and I would feel safe in saying there were more.

Over 100 people attended the 25th anniversary meet.

6 engineers participated in the "On-Time" competition.

Many trains were in the parade.

29 people ate 31 Hamburgers and 12 hot dogs on Friday night. Members provided dessert.

35 people had the subway lunch with us (5 trays with 15 mixed sandwiches) + Ice Tea and Chips we provided.

55 people attended the BBQ dinner (Pulled Pork, Chicken, Sausage, beans, potato salad and sides) + Ice Tea and some desserts that members provided.

\$1,106.00 Registration collection for meals (\$8.00 Lunch & \$12.00 Dinner)

-\$ 307.20 for Groceries, Ice, and Tea

-\$ 600.00 BBQ

-\$ 208.68 Subway

=\$ -9.88 Sub Total

-\$93.98 for the two signs I had made.

= \$ -103.86

Not bad totals if I do say so myself.

Footnotes for next year to whomever takes this on.

- Need at least two members working together full time especially on Saturday to keep up with registration.
- Need to consider a ticket plan for the meals. This also requires someone to take tickets at the start of the food line.
- Still need better communication with steamers during track closures. Maybe put a large chain and padlock across track at access points for steaming bays during events. LOL

- I bought too much food for the Friday meal based on suggestions from a few members. We cooked 36 of the 80 burgers I bought and had 5 cooked ones left over. We cooked 24 of the 48 hotdogs and had 12 cooked ones left over.
- Will need new labeling supplies next year.

I gave out the excess food we had to the members that were there to help cleanup Sunday morning.

Only one person mentioned they missed us having the breakfast there.

I am very thankful for all the help I received. I believe everyone had a great time.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year & Happy Holidays!
See Y'all Next Year!

Greg Moore



The Great Houston Cover Up - Part 3

The Story of How the Houston Area Live Steamers “Roundhouse” Was Designed and Built – by Doug Blodgett

Putting Up the Building

HALS is blessed with a great abundance of members who love to do construction projects at our track. Like most clubs, we have the usual ratio of approximately 20 -30% of members who come out and do maintenance on a regular basis, but whenever a major project comes up, it seems that almost everyone wants to participate. To get a workforce for the new building, all I had to do was let members know, via e-mail, what we would be erecting that coming weekend, and more workers than I could use would show up to help on Saturday morning.



Top - This is the steaming bay area before we started.

Right – Steel loaded on Rick’s trailer at suppliers.



In order to save on delivery charges, we decided to pick up the steel from the supplier ourselves. Fortunately, one of our members, Rick White, owns a large trailer and even better, the supplier was located between his house and the track. Rick and I met at the metal supplier one midweek afternoon and they loaded the trailer for us using a forklift. Because several of the beams were 25 feet in length, there was some overhang of the load, so we took back roads to the park. Once our load of steel arrived at Zube Park, several additional members were there to help unload and sort out the various pieces.



Top – unloading first load of steel on a cold, dreary, day.
Right – Gil Frietag, Peter Bryan, John Frank, Dennis Cranston,
Doug Blodgett. Rick White must be taking photo.

Every third steaming bay has air, electricity, and water lines terminating on it, so we had to determine as best we could where those lines and conduits were located underground before we installed the supporting posts. The lines had been put in so long ago, that no one knew for sure where they were. We did know that they all originated from our Maintenance of Way shed though, so after some educated guessing and with help from the county electrician, we finally made a decision and started digging holes. Our guesses were pretty good because we never hit anything but dirt while digging holes for the steel posts. We used a small gas powered auger to dig the holes to the 2'-6" depth called for in the plans and posts were concreted in to their full depth.



Peter Bryan and Clyde Brown drilling hole for steel post



Leveling the posts before concreting in. Dennis Cranston, Clyde Brown, Rick White with Art McGill looking on.

Once we installed the posts, it was time to install the long radial beams. We actually made these from pairs of steel channels and welded them back-to-back to form "I" beam girders that would support the roof. The bottom flanges of the beams were notched so they could fit over the top of the post and allow the web to drop into slots that had previously been cut into the tops of the posts. The first day we tried this, we welded several of the channels together before lifting them into place. Fortunately, we have some very strong fellows in the club who were able to manhandle these 25 foot monsters into the slots, but we decided that from then on, we would lift and fit the channels into the tops of the posts one at a time, and weld them together after they were in place.

Once the long beams were in place, we installed the cross-pieces (purlins) to the beams. These were temporarily held in place with screws and later welded to the beams. Before putting on the roof panels, we checked the whole structure and made sure that every joint was welded. Jim Cash and I brought our MIG welders to the site each weekend and various members helped us complete the welding.



Kevin Outlaw (on left) lifted one end of this first welded beam assembly in place by himself. He only did it once.



Crew is installing the rest of the beams.



Purlins installed.

Once the framework was completed, it was time to install the roof and there were lessons to be learned. We chose to use a simple corrugated design with an aluminized surface. Each panel is three feet wide and the supplier cuts each piece to whatever length you specify.

The first lesson we learned with the roof was not to use roof panels more than 20 feet long. That might be OK for professional roofers, but as amateurs, we were much better off installing shorter panels and overlapping them. One of the first panels we installed was 30 feet long and it was a problem to both transport and install.

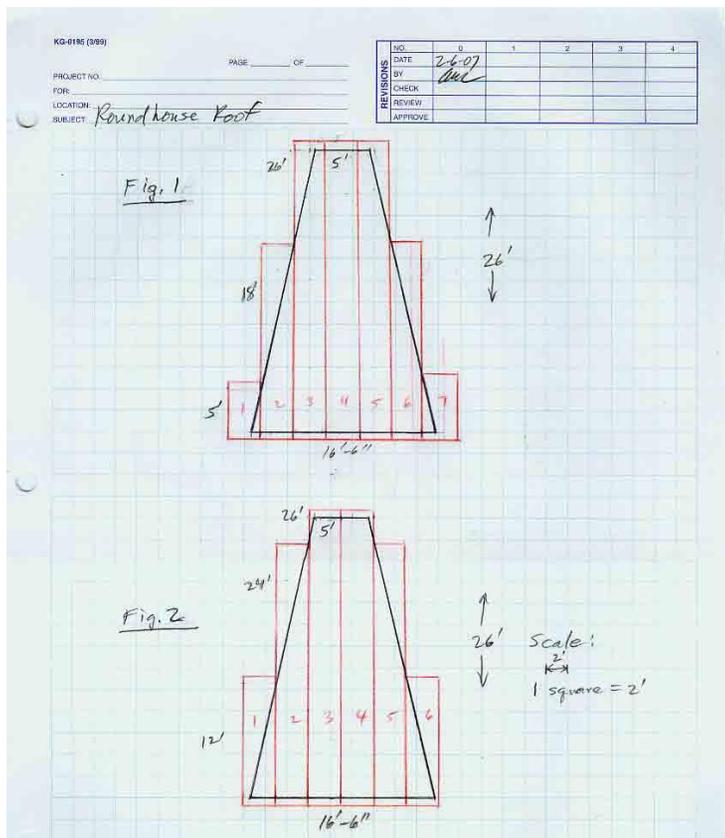


Jim Cash, George Leventon, and unknown helper laying out panel for cutting angles on them.



Gene Cover holding two ladders while Doug Blodgett on right and unknown helper work on installing roof panel.

The supplier doesn't cut roof panels with angles, but a lot of our panels were going to have angles on them because of the wedge shape of the various sections. That means that you get a rectangle panel and if your roof isn't rectangular, you have to cut the excess off yourself. This is why it was so important to have accurate drawings and was the one place we got into a bit of trouble after we made a few "as built" changes to the framework during construction. Not knowing any better, I had ordered panels cut exactly to the print lengths. Since a few of the "wedges" changed shape during construction, some of the panels came up too short. We eventually had to order some additional panels of roofing material in order to finish the 2007 job, but I tucked that lesson into the back of my mind for the future addition to the roundhouse cover. When we did the 2008 addition, I waited until the framing was completed, and then measured each wedge individually to double check the installed structural dimensions before ordering the roof panels. This time I made allowances for overlaps in the right places and we didn't order any panels longer than 20 feet.



Gene Covers idea for reducing panel cutting. Old way is on top and Gene's way on bottom.

Shortly after we started installing the first roof panels in 2007, Gene Cover came to me and said that he thought he had a better way to install the panels. Up to that point, and using my original design, we had been doing a lot of panel cutting because of the wedge shape of the roof. Gene made some sketches showing how we could eliminate a lot of that cutting just by changing where we put the first panels on each of the wedges. Everyone hated cutting the panels so we tried Gene's idea and it worked so well that we used his plan for the rest of the 2007 project and also for the entire 2008 addition.

We tried saws, rolling cutters, nibblers, and hand shears to cut those panels, but the best tool turned out to be a drill operated nibbler that I had picked up at one of those side show booths at the Houston Rodeo a number of years before and then never used until this project came along. It could ride over and cut up and down the ridges in the roof panel at the angles we needed far easier than more conventional cutting tools.

Lighting was installed under the roof for nighttime use. This has also turned out to be handy during rainy days too, as it gets kind of dark under the Roundhouse when it rains. Recently, we added a new sodium vapor light over the turntable (suspended from the Roundhouse structure) and another one next to the transfer table to make nighttime turntable operations even safer.

Next month I will do a short wrap on this series and show how the Roundhouse has not only become an integral part of the HALS facility but continues to evolve with useful additions.

**Public Run Day
November 19, 2016
Rick White**

None present could remember a day when the trains, conductors, engineers, and concessions were all ready by 8:38 AM. Amazing, and no riders in view. More photos at <https://plus.google.com/photos/107787018666084763391/albums/6357375682855859985>



Above: Spence Gaskin in uniform
Right: Pete Greene



Ready to go at 8:38 CST.



Two Mikados at one time.



Engineer Bob Barnett



Clockwise from top left: 1) Conductor Dennis Cranston, 2) Conductor Spence Gaskin, 3) Engineer Randy Neville, 4) Engineer Pete Greene, 5) Conductor Nathan Leventon, and 6) Engineer David James.



Clockwise from upper left: 1) Conductor Doug Payne, 2) Engineer David James, 3) Engineer Gerald Lee, 4) Conductor Bill Smith, 5) Conductor Connor Witkowski, and 6) Engineer Rich Businger, All photos taken are at: <https://plus.google.com/photos/107787018666084763391/albums/6357377439629493921>

Toys for Tots**November 19, 2016****Letha Grace McCoy**

SMILE! Our 10th year for "Toy for Tots" on Saturday, November 19, 2016, was a SUCCESS! The weather was perfect! We collected 9 large garbage bags full of toys and \$986.75 plus \$210 in memory of Will Chorley. One young man, about age 10, gave \$10. He wanted us to know that it was his money. Our Lady that drives up and brings her toys was back. This is about her 4th year.

Thank you! HALS Members! Special thanks go to Dennis for writing the check, Monterey and Rick for helping and the 3 White Grandsons for doing the lifting!

The 10 year report:

Year	Garbage Bags of Toys	Bikes	\$ for toys
2007	8		
2008	6		
2009	8		
2010	14		223.00
2011	11	2	148.05
2012	14	2*	477.55
2013	14	2	422.02
2014	9		829.00
2015	13		607.00
2016	9		\$1,196.75
Totals	106	6	\$3903.37

* And two children card tables

We would like to thank Carole Nemec, our "Toys for Tots" Lady, for being there for us. She has brought us boxes, signs, and things to hand out like pencils, pins, and magnets. She has met us at the warehouse and helped us unload those toys.

Gary and I are retiring. This is our last year. But, SMILE, one more time. We have a volunteer to take over the "Toys for Tots" toy drive. Monterey has volunteered so that means Rick and the Grandsons, have too!

Letha Grace and Gary McCoy

HALS Members,

On behalf of Marine Toys for Tots, myself, and thousands of children in our area, I want to thank you for your continued support. I want to give a special shout out to Letha for organizing this event each year and coordinating with me.

Last year we provided three toys each to over 8,400 impoverished children in Northwest Harris and Waller Counties. These families were identified through ten different assistance offices that also provided them with food and other necessities.

Providing this Christmas help takes a village of donors, volunteers, assistance offices, and more. Together we make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate than ourselves. Thank you for your generosity and assistance in that effort. I look forward to seeing you next year.

My best wishes to all of you this Thanksgiving, Christmas, and in the coming year.

Carole Nemec

Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Assistant Coordinator

Freitag Railroading on a Larger Stage:

By Rick White, Peter Bryan and Bob Barnett

Developed for the San Jacinto Model Railroading's December, 2016, DeRail article on 50 years of the Freitags' Stony Creek & Western layout. See <http://www.sanjacmodeltrains.org/>

1. Gil and Virginia Freitag were introduced to 1 ½: scale (Live Steam) when they started visiting the Comanche & Indian Gap Railroad in 1992. In 1996 Peter Bryan invited a group of Houston area model railroaders who were interested in operations to attend an operating meet at the Comanche & Indian Gap Railroad in 1996, and Gil became a fixture at these live steam operating meets.
2. Bitten by the bug, Gil and his son Gilbert constructed a pair of RS-3 locomotives from scratch in 1998.
3. About this time Gil and Virginia joined the Houston Area Live Steamers. Gil & Virginia have been awarded both the Southwest Live Steamers C.T. Sumrall Iron Horse Award and the SWLS Les Burford award. In addition, they have been awarded the HALS Marshal Black Award.



4. During his years at HALS Gil and Virginia were instrumental in the construction of the Phase 3 track that extended the railroad back into the woods along Little Cypress Creek and was recognized by HALS with the Marshall Black award for his contributions in that effort.
5. Gil along with fellow operations enthusiasts Peter Bryan, Ed Rains, Rick White and Randall Wilson established the HALS tradition of hosting several “Ops Days” each year in addition to the Run Days where the club provides free passenger rides to the public each month from March through November. Many Houston area model railroaders have attended the Ops Days and enjoyed the fun of operating on a large scale railroad.
6. In early 2000’s Gil rebuilt several of the station buildings that are located at the towns on the HALS track. Gil also built the Lakeside station from scratch (see photos on its installation day.) These beautifully detailed structures in authentic Santa Fe and D&RGW colors can be seen today along the track.



Lakeside Station scratch built by Gil Freitag and installed this date: 2009-0620

7. Although the stroke he suffered several years ago has limited his physical work at HALS Gil and Virginia continue to be members and are frequently at the track for meets and operating events.



Gil Freitag installing the concrete ties that he made. First installation at HALS 1/7/2005



Gil Freitag tamping ballast for the first concrete ties used at HALS 1/7/2005
This track survived the HALS floods and has not been re-aligned since 1/7/2005.



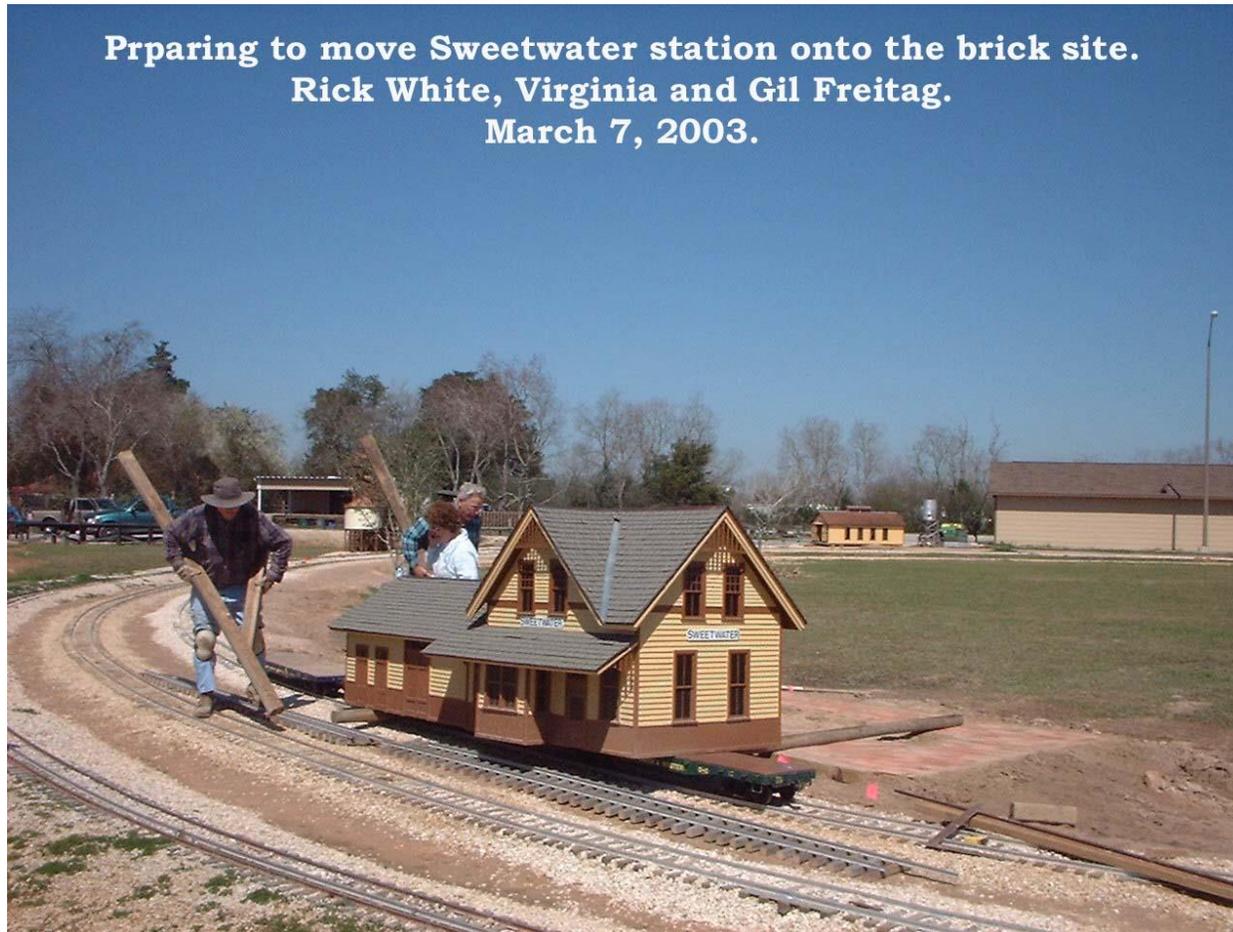
Gil and Virginia switching at Caliente on a HALS OPS Day, 1/29/2005



Gil Freitag smoothing concrete under the approach to the transfer table. 2002-0618



Ron Pasley and Gil Freitag making concrete. Gil is about to put in another bucket. Phase III bridge abutment. 10/8/2002



Rick White, Virginia Freitag, and Gil Freitag moving Sweetwater Station after Gil re-built it. 2003-0307



HALS Fun Run January 28, 2006, with their RS3 and the new and safer riding car. Gil & Virginia Freitag

Help HALS get \$\$\$ while you shop!

Amazon Smile

Kroger's Community Rewards

Amazon Smile and Kroger's Community Rewards are efforts by Amazon and Kroger to support the non-profit organizations that their customers believe in. You can help HALS by using them. Instead of going to Amazon.com, go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> to do your Amazon shopping. Pick out Houston Area Live Steamers as your choice of non-profit organizations. If you shop Kroger and have a Kroger rewards card, then go to <https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow> and select Houston Area Live Steamers (oops, they wrote down streamers). **You have to renew this every year for Kroger.** This does not take anything away from you – it just gives money to HALS! These programs bring in 30 dollars a month with only three members in each right now. This does not cost you more, but does contribute to HALS.

Coming in the December Stack Talk

Work Day for December
Your Project

2017 HALS Board of Directors

President	Bill Smith
V.P. Operations	Bob Barnett
V.P. Facilities	Spence Gaskin
V.P. Track & Right of Way	Peder Serkland
V.P. Motive Power & Equipment	Gary Brothers
Secretary	Rick White
Treasurer	Dennis Cranston
Former President	Pete Greene
V.P. Communications	Open – main duty is writing Stack Talk and taking photos for it.
V.P. Manpower	Open – main duty is Training
Senior Director	Connor Witkowski
Junior Director	JB Cason

(NOTE: Pete Greene is continuing as the "Former President" since Bob Barnett is still on the Board.)

Editor's Comments

Great 25th Anniversary Meet. More members were at the Saturday day evening meal than at any Christmas Party, so HALS awards were given out then. The Toys for Tots drive went well. 2016 had the third most public run day riders for any year. Just need a few more passenger cars and that new car barn to store them in to get more passengers on the trains.

Rick White, Stack Talk Editor

I can be reached and submissions may be made at the following email address:

Rick.White.Jr@gmail.com

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P.O. Box 215
Hockley, Texas 77447-0215

HALS Physical Address

Houston Area Live Steamers, Inc.
17802 Roberts Rd.
Hockley, Texas 77447-0215

To reach **all HALS members** send email to roundhouse@hals.org and roundhouse1@hals.org

To access the **HALS Public Facebook** page use the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/HALS.ORG>

NOTE: No Login required

To access the **HALS Internal Facebook** page use the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1424915724430631>

NOTE: Login required



Things for Sale

FOR SALE: Screws, #8, 1-1/4" long. 5,000 for \$25.00. **Contact Barry Tobias (713) 729-2199**

FOR SALE: 3/16" Copper Rivets 1-1/4" long. \$10.00 a pound. **Contact Barry Tobias (713) 729-2199**

FOR SALE: 1/2" o.d. Copper Tubing, 3/8" i.d. Type L. \$1.15 per foot.

Contact Barry Tobias (713) 729-2199

FOR SALE: 45% Silver Solder 1 oz. \$12.00 **Contact Barry Tobias (713) 729-2199**

For Sale

Two Intermodal Cars with containers

Owner: Jerry Salsbury: [785-893-4241](tel:785-893-4241)

Posted by Richard Osborn: [254-721-0438](tel:254-721-0438)

Brand new and listed for sale, two well or stack cars from Mountain Car Company. Both cars are complete with MCC trucks and couplers. These new cars have never been pulled, only on the rail for pictures. Beautifully built, painted and lettered by MCC. Owner ordered and has now decided to retire from the hobby and sell out. Asking \$6,500 for both. Please contact the owner or me for more information. Richard Osborn





MDM built GP 7.
Loco is 24 volt electric.
\$13,500.00

Also available:
Cotton Belt engineers car
with two seats, air
compressor and Tom Bee
trucks with brakes
\$1500.00

Shane Murphy
shane.murphy@ymail.com

All 7.5 inch gauge.