



June 2017, Houston Area Live Steamers, Volume 2017 Issue 06, Rick White, Editor

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The Presidential Siding

June 2017

Hello all,

We are well into the Public Run Day season as well as into the heat of summer. Our Public Run Days have had excellent attendance as well as excellent Concession / Donation activity. Special Thanks go to all of you who have participated in those Run Days!!!

Things seem to be going well, but there is always room to improve.

We have had two Fun Run Days so far this year. Attendance was nearly fifty for the first one and in the thirties on the second.. We have had good weather for those Fun Days, with everyone that came out having a great time and lots of train running with no meetings, no scheduled work activities, and a HALS provided free lunch. We have two more scheduled this year, so keep your eyes on the calendar and try to attend. I believe that you will enjoy them and have a good time.

Speaking of participation, don't forget that we have a couple of Operations Days scheduled later in the year as well. Come out and do some operations, run a passenger train, whatever. There is always a lot going on and we would like to see you at the Park.

The New Car Barn is still progressing and we are getting close to having the Permit request completed and submitted. The concrete floor has been poured and looking good and assembly of the Car Racks has begun. I can't wait to see the New Barn in operation.

Speaking of Car Barns, the loading of engines and cars was studied in detail and an initial rearrangement of the Engine Barn has taken place. J.B. Cason and a committee has been put into place to study, determine, and document the rules for the storage of Cars, Engines, etc. in the Original Car Barn and Engine Barn Only. This is a vital activity which is nearing completion. Keep an eye out for more information on this issue which should be coming out soon.

On the communications front we are communicating with the following tools / methods:

- Public facing Facebook page
- "Closed" Facebook page which is a group with HALS members, members of the Public and apparently others
- E-mail notification of Public Run Days via MailChimp to those who have subscribed to it. Mostly the Public

- Announce Lists used for general distribution of information to Members
- Roundhouse Lists used for distribution of information to Members as well as general discussion among Members
- Website with Public and Members Only areas
- HALS Status Update Line which provides near real time updates leading up to Public Run Day

We continue to have issues with distributing information within HALS. We are discussing in the Board Meetings the possibility of merging some of these methods, eliminating some of these methods, and the possibility of using new to us things like Yahoo Groups, and a “Secret” Facebook page. Stay tuned for more information coming out on this. If you are interested in getting involved with some of these discussions, want to lead a team to investigate further, please contact me and / or any of the Board Members. We would be glad to have the participation.

On a different note, one of our long-term members, Gary Brothers has been in the hospital the last couple of weeks fighting some serious medical issues. He is continuing to slowly improve.. Please keep Gary in your thoughts... Relationship with the County continues to be good, with no major issues outstanding. I have requested that the door to the shop (and lockset) be replaced due to damage. That request is moving slowly at the moment. There is also some repair work going on in the Ticket Booth window that has suffered some water damage. In closing, please remember that we need you at the Park to assist with the various maintenance activities that are required to keep us going.

Hope to see you on the rails!

Bill Smith

President, Houston Area Live Steamers, Inc.
Home of the Cypress Creek & Southern
Railroad

Air Brakes

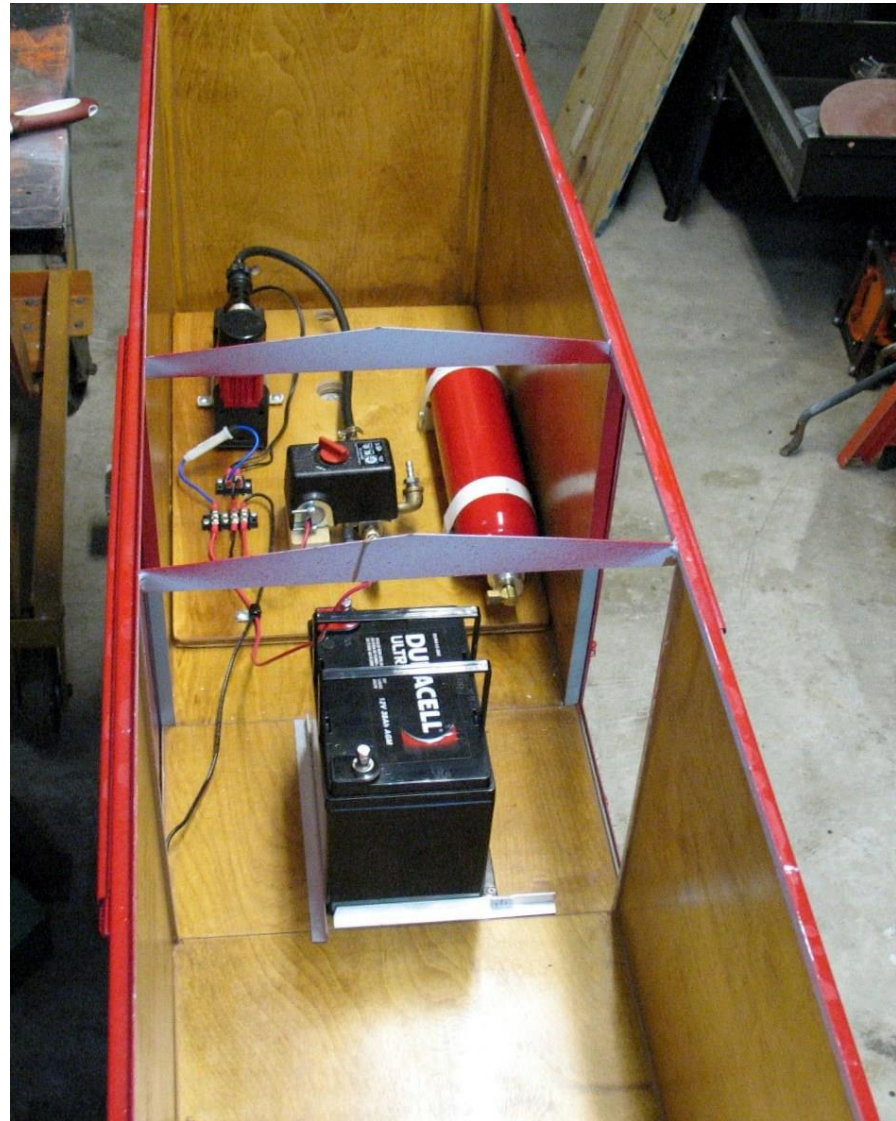
Doug Blodgett

I've started installing the equipment needed for air brakes into the new boxcar. I will have air brakes on the tool car and boxcar for sure but will keep vacuum on the tender. That's necessary so I can pull Nick Edwards's Pullmans which use vacuum brakes.

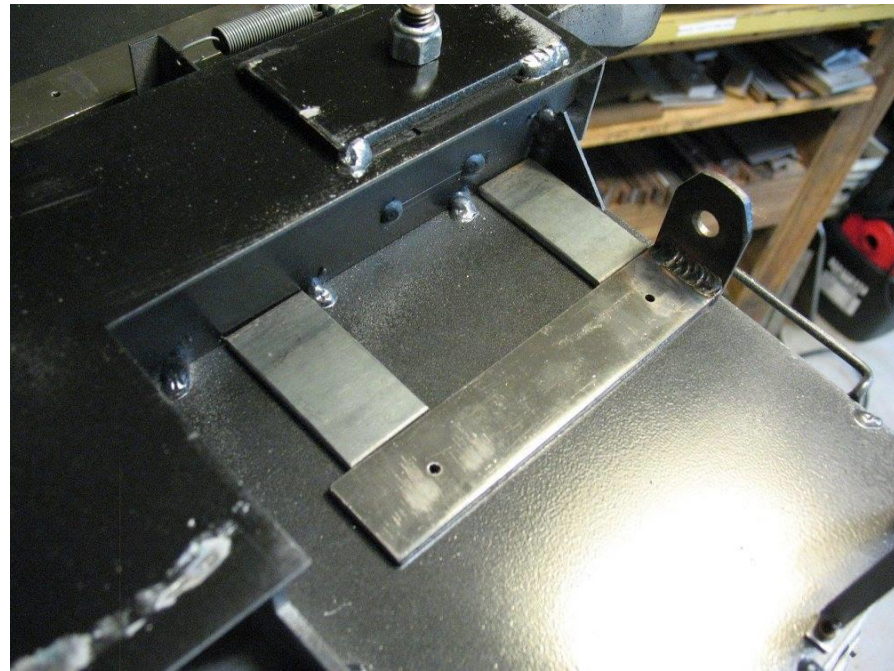
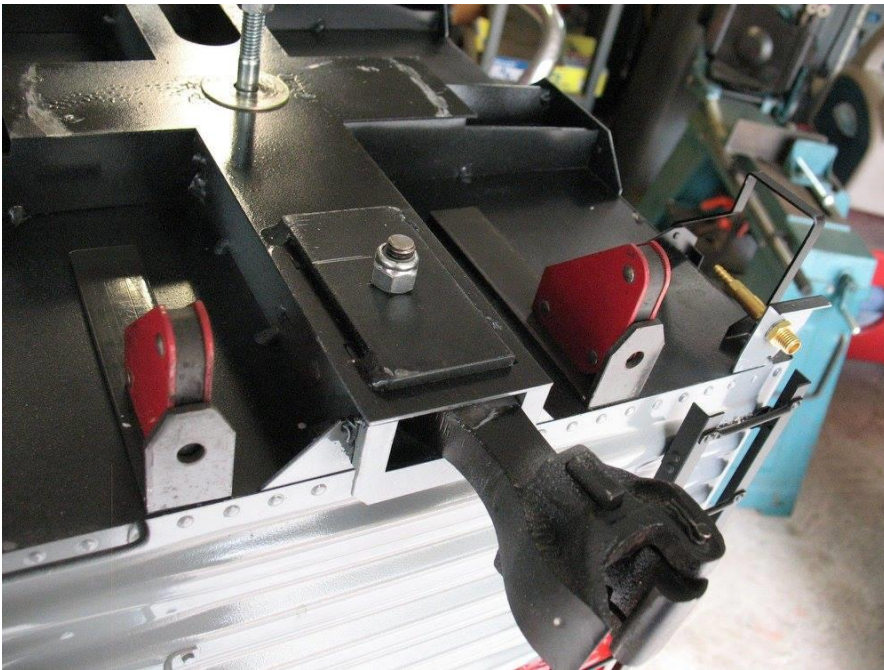
No matter how many parts I keep around, I never have the ones I need for the current project. Spent most of yesterday scrounging hardware stores for a small pressure gauge. I have a dozen pressure gauges in the bins but they are either the totally wrong pressure (don't need a miniature gauge with 3000 pounds) or it's a back mount when I need a bottom mount. Same with fittings.

When I first built this box car, I forgot to put any kind of brackets on it for chains. Since I have it in the shop to fit it with air brakes and compressor, tank, and battery, I am also adding the chain brackets.

This is an all sheet metal car which makes it a bit difficult to add the brackets, but I have made them so they can be bolted to the floor pan. The interior of the car is paneled in wood, so there is plenty of support for the brackets to be bolted to. If I had done this originally, this would have made more sense, I could have just welded the brackets to the floor pan. Oh well.



I still need to make one more bracket and fitting which will be for the air supply to the brake valve mounted on the tender. I know, most people mount it on the engine, but when I take my engine anywhere, I have to disconnect the tender so this will save one disconnect point. Besides, I already have steam and vacuum brake handles in the cab - no sense adding to the confusion.



Bracket has been welded up and is being set in place with two spacers made from scrap. 1/8" holes are used to drill the pilot holes and will be enlarged for the bolts before final mounting.

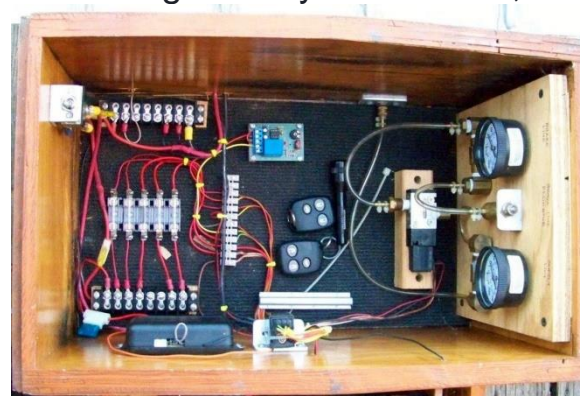
Fun Run Day, June 10

Spence Gaskin

I headed out to Zube today to test out some cars I received from John Hannah. Caboose 01483 is a new favorite, solid car with foot pegs makes a surprisingly good ride. The other caboose has a great air brake system; a new battery should get it going. A nice D&RG boxcar went to Doug Blodgett, we were both surprised to find out it was an all wood car with just some thin metal on the exterior. Art Gibson & Bill Courtright were fired up at the Gauge 1 Track early. Doug Blodgett, Greg Randall, and Rolland Boutwell were getting their larger engines fired up, but had not left the steaming bay by the time I left at around 10:15. JB Cason & Bill Howe were out running their trains, and Pete Greene did a bit of weed whacking to clear off the 1" track for our out-of-towner Greg Randall. More and more people were showing up to what looked like a great day at the track, sorry I had to leave early.



Topping the battery water off and charging the battery for the brakes.



A very well laid out air brake system...If only this were in a riding car. Doug Blodgett says: I think Bill Laird built this air brake system. Note the remote controllers lying in the center.



Doug Blodgett says: Wood box car weighted down with concrete blocks. I put it in my consist and it tracked beautifully.



One of the brown hoppers at front is mine, other belongs to John Hannah. They seem to go well with the train.



Art Gibson's passenger train. It lost its cars shortly after this, but his remote control soon put things back into shape.



D&RG Caboose with foot pegs on the corners. Add a pillow and you can ride the roof.



Pete Greene sneaking in some work on a non-work day...but it was to accommodate a valued 1" scale visitor.



JB Cason with his Western Pacific train.



Preparing to run in the shade. — with Doug Blodgett and Bob Dobrowolski.

Fun Run Day, June 10 Doug Blodgett

At the Steaming Bays



Doug Blodgett with his Mikado. Photo courtesy of Pete Greene with Doug's camera. Thanks Pete.



Roland Boutwell steaming up.



Greg Randall pulling out. Pete Greene to the left and Case & Mike Alexander to the right.

So glad Greg got to run today as he has pretty much single handedly saved our 4.75" gauge track.

Fun Run Day, June 10
Rick White



Greg Randall's 1" scale Pacific



Greg Randall



Bob Dobrowolski



Doug Blodgett



Doug Payne and family



Tomas & Erin Sandoval with their children plus Case Alexander.



Peder Serkland riding out to the ballast tippel for another load of ballast.



Greg Randall



ABOVE: Donna Greene running JB Cason's Western Pacific F7A and F7B units.



Doug Blodgett



RIGHT: Tomas & Erin Sandoval with their children plus a young couple from Glasgow, Scotland who are visiting Houston and just happened to discover HALS.



Bob Dobrowolski at HALS Fun Run, the most comfortable seat in action today!

Doug Blodgett: Public Run Day, June 17

Today was run day and we had quite a crowd. I noticed that people appeared to be backed up into the concession area about 11:00.

One steam engine was in service today with Vance Nickerson driving Pete Greene's TSR 400 Mikado. Pete was the conductor today. The Gauge 1 railroaders had a pretty good crowd looking at their trains and it almost looked like they were holding instruction classes with some very avid students.

I decided not to run my own engine today because of the anticipated heat. I don't do well in heat any more so just rolled it out for visitors to look at.



Rich Businger hauling visitors. This is by Sweetwater, a good spot for photos.



Gauge 1 class with Bill Courtright as the instructor. The young man in the blue shirt is named William Liebbe and attends A&M. He is interested in building a 1.5" scale Kozo A3 and has filled out an application to join HALS.



Instructor Bill Courtright describing his coal fired gauge 1 loco. Bill Courtright says: No doubt about it , it's fun sharing what I know.



JB Cason with his Western Pacific F7A and F7B units.



Vance Nickerson pulling out of the station on TSR #400 with the cylinder cocks belching steam.



Pete Greene conducting for Vance Nickerson.



George Leventon on left and Dennis Cranston on right.



Barry Tobias taking tickets.



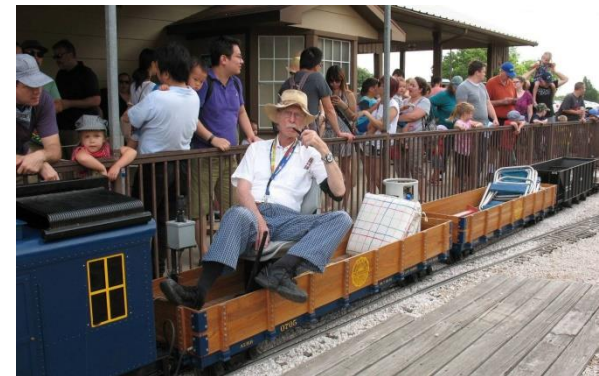
The wonderful concession staff: Marge Leventon and Donna Greene



Bill Howe, in the weeds.



Vance Nickerson with TSR #400.



Barry Tobias, station master, resting between tickets.



Greg Moore: Public Run Day, June 17

Greg posted videos in the Houston Area Live Steamers group on Facebook.



Case Alexander



Mike Alexander



Bob Dobrowolski



Rich Businger



Vance Nickerson



Pete Greene



George Leventon



JB Cason



Rick White and Kaitlin Schade

Public Run Day, June 17

Rick White

The day started out at 78 F at 6:30 AM when JB Cason arrived to get out his equipment and the HALS passenger equipment. Coming early, he tired out early. Bill Howe arrived around 7 AM and removed the high remote switch stand coming into the station and then installed a new hockey puck. Bill took the broken remote high switch stand with him for Ken Smith to fix. Thank you Bill and Ken! Was up to 95 by the time we left with a forecast of 97 by 5 PM. Hot except for a little breeze.

Great turnout by the public. We got to visit with Vance & Judy Nickerson again, which is a rare pleasure. Vance had Pete Greene's Mikado running sweetly. Bill Howe ran reverse direction on Phase II to keep us on our toes, but he waited forever at Cabin Creek to find a hole in the traffic to make the trip to Caliente. I have some photos of trains, but was conductor on JB's train all day and have few of my own photos, you need to see Doug Blodgett's photos and Greg Moore's photos to get a better idea of all who came today. I was training Kaitlin Schade to be a conductor and she is now qualified!



Doug Blodgett taking photos of the trains as they go by. A photo of a photographer, a rare image.



Bill Howe reaching out. Bill is headed back to the car barn.



Judy Nickerson, Donna Greene, Elizabeth Alexander, and Marge Leventon.



Engineer Justin Schade.



Conductor Kaitlin Schade watching her dad drive into the station.



Greg Moore taking photos. He posted this photo on Facebook.



Greg Moore taking a video. He posted this video on Facebook.



Pointing the way is Bill Smith.

Doug Blodgett: Work Day, June 19

Someone commented in a recent post that we need to do more "small" jobs around the track as part of our maintenance program. I couldn't agree more and here's a perfect example.

During run day I went into Jackson Tower to take a few pictures of the action down below and had to run an obstacle course to get to the platform. Tree limbs hanging across the railings, spiders building webs on them to the railings, and stuff crunching under my feet all the way up. Obviously, we don't use the tower too much any more, but that's no need to ignore it's maintenance.

Actually, there are lots of places on the track where trees need to be trimmed on a regular basis but no one thinks to do it until they just plain get in the way. I also noticed, on run day, the area where the "old guys" sit under the trees is starting to get limbs awfully low again. I did those a year ago and didn't have the energy to tackle them again today. Today was for the Tower.

Since this was a small job, I brought everything I needed from home except the Gator. This is a key element in doing a small job - figure out what you need to do it and bring what you need unless you KNOW the club has it on hand and readily available.

Trimming the branches is the easy part. Hauling them away wasn't too hard in this case, but on a larger job, they take quite a few trips. Two people would be ideal for the larger jobs and would be even easier if the club were to invest in a brush wagon that could carry much more than the Gator can.

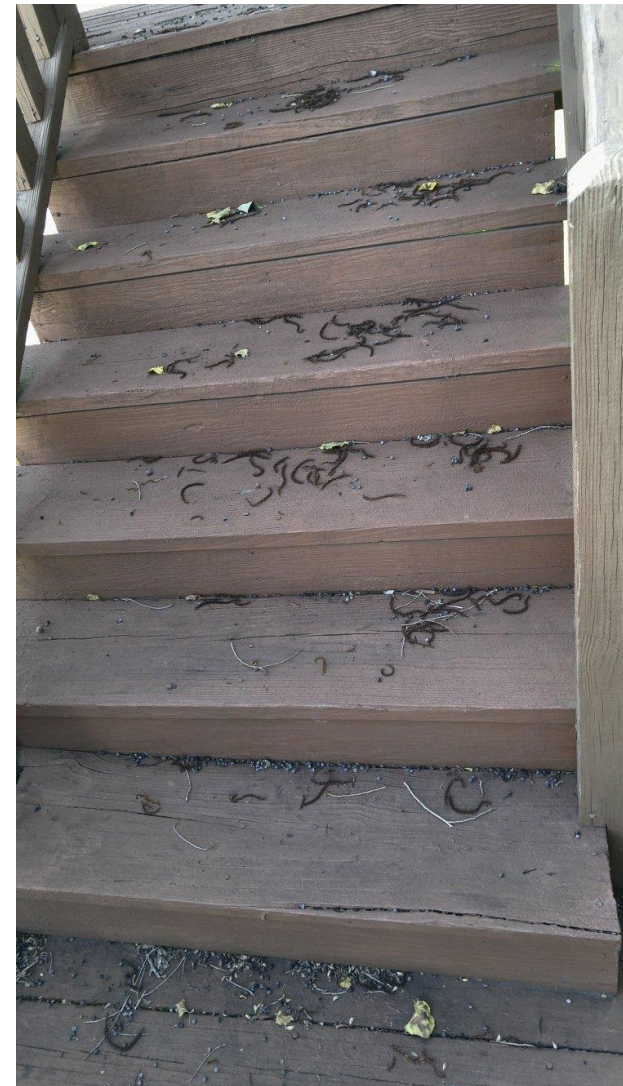


A before shot showing my pole saw and the overhangs that need to be cut.

One last thought. The club has had a brand new gas powered pole saw sitting in a carton in the tractor shed for over a year. We need to get it unpacked and start using it. I have switched to only the manufactured gas for my pole saw because I don't use it on a regular basis. That "artificial" gas is good stuff and it doesn't attack the rubber seals in the engine. I've had no trouble with my pole saw since I made the switch a couple of years ago after the last carb rebuild



More overhangs that needed to be trimmed.



Steps hadn't been cleaned in some time.



LEFT: The "after" shot. I cleaned the steps with a shop broom but I should have brought my battery powered blower. It would have been way easier. Branches that appear to still be over the steps are actually beyond the steps.

BELOW: Another "after" shot.



The last load of branches after the trimming is done. This was a two load job - easy.

This whole job only took a little over an hour to do from start to finish including putting air in the Gator tires. We really need to change two of those tires as they lose their air overnight

HALS Events 2017

All events at Zube Park

January 7: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
January 21: Work Day
January 23: Board Meeting 7PM
January 28: OPS Day

February 4: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
February 18: HALS at Greater Houston Train Show
February 20: Board Meeting at 7 PM
February 23-25: Chugga Chugga Chili Fest (Bob Barnett)

March 4: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 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 at 7 PM

April 1: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
April 8: Fun Run Day
April 15: Public Run Day 9 AM to 2 PM
April 24: Board Meeting at 7 PM

May 13: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
May 20: Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
May 22: Board Meeting at 7 PM
May 24-28: Memorial Day Weekend Meet (Gary Brothers)

June 3: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
June 10: Fun Run Day
June 17: Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
June 26: Board Meeting at 7 PM

July 8: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
July 15: Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
July 24: Board Meeting at 7 PM

August 5: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
August 19: Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
August 28: Board Meeting at 7 PM

September 9: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
September 16: Public Run Day 9 to 1
September 25: Board Meeting at 7 PM
September 30: OPS Day

October 7: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
October 14: Fun Run Day
October 21: Public Run Day 9 to 2
October 23: Board Meeting at 7 PM
October 28: OPS Day

November 4: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
November 9 – 12: SWLS Meet and HALS Anniversary Meet
November 18: Public Run Day 9 to 2 with Toys for Tots.
November 27: Board Meeting at 7 PM at Zube Park

December 2: Work Day and General Membership Meeting at 1 PM
December 11: Board Meeting at 7 PM at Zube Park

February 17, 2018, Greater Houston Train Show
February 22-24, 2018: Chugga Chugga Chili Fest

Public Facebook pages

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

No Login required

Greg Moore is in charge of this Facebook page.

E-mail is bubbadawg@gmail.com

Facebook Group:**Houston Area Live Steamers**

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

Facebook login required

This is where you can post your photos.

Tomas Sandoval is in charge of this group and he approves membership requests.

E-mail is tomas_sandoval@hotmail.com

Many non-HALS members belong and you can share photos from here to your timeline for your friends to see. Photos from the track and your train related projects are normally posted here.

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 July Stack Talk

Work Day
Public run day
Projects around the park
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	Rich Businger
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

Rick White, Stack Talk Editor

I write this on a busy 4th of July weekend with seven family members visiting us for the whole week. I hope you have as much family time to enjoy this Independence Day. I will have more time for family next year when I no longer edit Stack Talk. We need a new editor for 2018.

I can be reached and submissions may be made at the following e-mail address: Rick.White.Jr@gmail.com

HALS Mailing Address

Houston Area Live Steamers, Inc.
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>

Greg Moore is in charge of this Facebook page(s). E-mail is bubbadaWG@gmail.com

NOTE: No Login required

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

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

NOTE: Facebook login required



Things for Sale

NEW: Five inch Kurt Vice \$175, which is a machine vice. **Contact Barry Tobias (713) 729-2199**

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**

Climax A in Gauge 1 Ed Hume



Ed Hume's book, "A Climax Class A Live Steam Locomotive", is newly available for online ordering at <http://www.createspace.com/7097131> or from Amazon.com (use the link below or just search for Hume Climax A). A download website for the computer files that accompany the book is at

<http://Model-Shop.net>. A .zip archive is available which contains DXF drawing files and G-code program files to help builders use CNC machine tools to fabricate selected parts of the locomotive model. See the [Catalog](#) page on the Model-Shop.net site for more information on the book.



Amazon link: https://www.amazon.com/Climax-Class-Steam-Locomotive-Model/dp/1545404895/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1494506764&sr=1-1&keywords=Hume+Climax+A

Texas Mexican Equipment Sale

Tomas Sandoval

Here is what I still have left of the TEXAS MEXICAN ROLLING STOCK LISTED BELOW..

- TM Gondola 78" \$1100 MCC trucks and couplers
- TM Gondola (Fred Springer estate) 78" \$1500 (only one graphic is clear coated)
- TM Tank Car 73" \$1350 MCC trucks and couplers
- New Southern Pacific RR BulkHead Flat Car 83" \$1850 with TOM BEE trucks and couplers

I can be reached by email tomas_sandoval@hotmail.com
or by Phone (e-mail me or message me to get my phone number).
If I do not answer, please leave me a message and I will call you back.
Thanks for your time and consideration,
Tomas Sandoval IV

