



# Keeping Track Newsletter

*Welcome to the first edition of our new electronic newsletter!*

Kids Club is excited to produce a new electronic version of our newsletter! This reaches you faster and more frequently than a paper version would. If you have a better email to use or would like to be removed from these emailings, please send an update to [membership@traincollectors.org](mailto:membership@traincollectors.org).

In addition, if you have a story and pictures you would like to share with the rest of the Kids Club train world, please submit them to the same email address.

Volume 14: Issue 1 Spring 2017



Fun at the National Toy Train Museum!

## LAKE ERIE CHAPTER

On Nov 26 at the Lake Erie Chapter Train Show, we enrolled 16 more kids for the Great Lakes Division TCA Kids Club, bringing our total enrollment from two train shows to 29 kids.

We also invited the TCA Kids Club members to come on the stage and "play with trains." We had three rugs with a pile of track and a train set on each. Kids were invited to put the track together and enjoy their efforts by running the trains themselves. A key person who enabled all of this to happen was TCA member Ron Cansky, who was our conductor for the day, ensuring that all the questions the kids might have would be answered and help wherever needed. Parents and grand-parents also joined the fun. Trains ran from 10 am to 3 pm the entire time of the show. Several folks gave us positive comments about how good an idea this was.

As the show neared its end there was a drawing held for the kids: the winner was Blake Nowak who chose a free Chessie U36 diesel with porthole caboose as his prize to take home!

Below are a few photos of the kids in action, and a picture of Blake and his sister with his Chessie diesel.

Thank yous go out to several Division TCA members who made donations for this activity as well as gift to the kids as they signed up for the TCA Kids Club.



## METCA DIVISION

## METCA makes division history by Kevin Quinn - 98-47167- President Metropolitan Division

### Brief History:

The Year was 2015 and the location was Somerset NJ, the event- TCA 61<sup>st</sup> National Convention. This is where the Metca Division & the Somerset County 4H Trainmasters would meet and form a great friendship. I was the division's vice president when I first met Jim Wood. He is a TCA member and one of the adult leaders of SC4HT. We talked for a bit while the kids and other adults were putting together their 40x60 modular O gauge layout. As we were talking I am noticing this is not like any of the other layouts. After chatting for a bit, I let him get back to work. When I returned I had Doug Schembs (registration co-chair) & Rem Hunnewell (trading hall chair) in tow. We walked through the trading hall checking out all the trains for sale and then over to the layouts.

We stopped at the SC4HT layout and admired its coolness and uniqueness. Not to take away anything from the other layouts they are all great in their own rights but the Trainmasters layout was different. That difference being the layout was made by the kids. The youth members of this club built and made the modular layout under the supervision of the adults. The three of us talked to some of their members and made the introductions. Adult leader Anthony Siniscalco, another TCA member, summarized the club operations to us as we toured the layout. The scenery on the modules ranged from small towns, to dinosaurs, to military airbases and showed the many talents of this club. I knew right away that this club would be a benefit to the hobby and a potential partner of Metca.

members from METCA, SC4HT & SGMA pose at the 2015 TCA convention



A few months went by and I proposed the idea of SC4HT becoming our kids club up to my Board of Directors. After some discussion I contacted Jim Wood to discuss the proposal. We emailed and had phone conversations discussing the issues and goals of this proposal. I brought Director Doug Schembs with me to a meeting at a Greenberg's show that the club was operating at. This is where Jim & Tony introduced us to the rest of his adult leadership. We sat down and hashed out an agreement that would be beneficial to SC4HT, Metca & the hobby. Doug and I pitched the goal: which is to promote the hobby and expand the memberships of the organizations. Understanding there was no reason to re-invent the wheel, whether with resources or logistics, Metca could never build what 4H already has. SC4HT has already mastered the concept of a kids' club. Issues of equal importance discussed were insurance, finances, commitment, and club autonomy. Our meeting was very straight forward. I made it quite clear that the Metropolitan Division would never interfere with 4H operations, we would always support. I asked in return that all the youth members become TCA & Metca Kid's club members. This was whole heartily agreed upon. The 75 minute meeting ended in positive spirits and handshakes. I was later invited to a meeting with the parents of the kids, where I gave a short presentation and answered questions. They were very happy that a large organization took interest in their club. One parent asked me "what do I get out of this?" I replied: personally, I get the satisfaction that the kids belong to the best train club in the country, professionally, my organization gets 30 new members and the hope that one of them will replace me one day." The parents approved of this historic partnership.







Officers stand with SC4HT leaders & members at their June 2016 show.

The Metca's kid club banner hung for the first time at the spring show of the SC4HT. The Metca table was set up and materials about TCA were displayed along with our divisional items. A 1971 Metca F3 pulled Metca cars around the modular layout for the first time at that June show. I want to thank Jim Wood for entertaining that first conversation we had about this venture. From that original conversation, I believe good things for our great hobby will come out of this friendship. The Metropolitan Division is very proud of this historic accomplishment. We are very fortunate to have SC4HT operate as our Kids club. They are a great club with good leadership and talented kids. We are looking forward to a long friendship. After all, one of TCA's basic premises is to promote friendship and fellowship in collecting and operating toy trains.

For more info on the Somerset County 4H Trainmasters go to their website:  
<http://www.trainmasters.sc4-h.org/index.shtml>

# Psycho for HO

By Alfred James Dill,

TCA# [12-67056](#)



My 15 year old daughter Darien loves to build things for her HO layout. When she's not in the basement arranging track or running wires for lights and accessories, she can be found up in her room, watching black and white movies and scratch building at her desk. She enjoys constructing plastic airplanes, boats, houses, restaurants, stores, and banks from old kits, but her true love, is to create something out of nothing.

Darien and I were out and about one day checking into a local model train store that we had never been to before. We had read about the place on the internet, and were very interested in the fact that it had a used section. We love vintage stuff, so we were eager to see what old gems we could find.

The store was great! Packed floor to ceiling with everything a model railroader needs to build an HO empire. We made our way to the back wall where we could see rows and rows of old pre-assembled model buildings. Darien, like her dad, enjoys incorporating pre-built, dusty old structures in with her scratch builds. The aged models definitely do add a certain charm.

As we scanned the shelves, something caught my eye. Up on one of the higher shelves was a model that stood apart from the rest. "I can't believe it!" I said aloud, as I nudged my daughter, (she hates that and I should know better by now) and brought her attention to my amazing find. Her annoyed expression quickly turned to glee when she spotted it, the "Bates Mansion" from the horror film classic "Psycho". The model was beautifully built, (from a kit manufactured by Polar Lights) and hand painted. It sat on a patch of land covered with grass, trees, and shrubbery. It was evident that the modeler put much care and effort into the project.

You could tell it had been hastily cut out of his layout. There was chipped plaster around the edge of the base, wires hanging, and benchwork remnants. It was awesome, but it needed work.

Being a big fan of the film PSYCHO, the "Bates Mansion" was something that Darien (believe it or not) had planned to scratch build in the future. We were surprised to see it there, as we had no idea that a model kit even existed. We were most interested in purchasing this unique item. The shopkeeper gave us a great deal. We were more than pleased with our new acquisition.

Now that we had the Bates Mansion, all that was needed was the iconic "Bates Motel". There are no "Bates Motel" model kits on the market, but upon searching the web, I found that other modelers used Plasticville motels to accompany their Bates mansions. I mentioned this option to my daughter and she laughed. "No dad", she said dismissively, "I'm going to build this one."

Before she started the Motel, she set to re-building the tattered base of the "Bates Mansion". She used one inch strips of hand cut cardboard to make a basket weave structure, and incorporated thin plywood and foam for stability. She used a level throughout this project to ensure the mansions even perch upon the hill. When the structure was sound, she covered the hill with torn newspaper dipped in her own home made plaster mix. When the hill was smooth and dry, she painted it green. She then sculpted a precarious flight of stairs that would serve well enough to lead Norman home. After that, she peppered the hill with moss, sand (sawdust), and a blend of faux and real trees. She created a beautiful fall landscape that she then decorated with tiny pumpkins that she sculpted and painted herself. I must say, it was positively stunning!



For the rest of this wonderful story, check out the article at <http://tcaetrain.org/2d-articles/layouts/psycho-HO/index.shtml>



# *The TCA Needs YOU!!*

*We are looking for volunteers to hand out promotional and Kid treat bags at the York, PA train meet Friday and Saturday, April 28 and 29, 2017.*

*Please contact Tammy Hersh, National Business Manager, at 717-687-8623 or via email at [thersh@traincollectors.org](mailto:thersh@traincollectors.org) if you are interested in lending a hand!*

*Just for fun!*

### **Thomas the Train Word Search**

by PartySuppliesHut.com

G C J H K T E R S W K X F I J  
 T N W T R U A N E W N Q R L S  
 W J I A D I B V G L A L I L T  
 E G I V L R K L D I T D E H Y  
 V N F W I N A K I D N N N B Y  
 K A A Y T R T W R Y N E D Q A  
 X Y U N H L D B B U B T Z B T  
 S K C F Y F H W T T H O M A S  
 J A C X F A K F F O M W R A S  
 S Y B A J W N R O Z C J K Y X  
 C H Q C R U O B R E L M I P F  
 H W I L Q T P V W P F T C L S  
 P S E S D S E L C I H E V X O  
 X R X Z Z Y W V R O D O S K Z  
 E E X E R M V B J T B Q J V U

BRIDGES  
 DRIVING  
 ENGINE  
 FRIEND  
 RAILWAYS  
 SODOR  
 TANK  
 THOMAS  
 TRACK

TRACK  
TRAIN  
TUNNELS  
VEHICLES