

From The Layout Editor: Southern Division members have interesting back stories, and the Board of Directors thought it would be fun to "spotlight" one of those members each quarter, space permitting.



**Early Years**: I was born in Chicago in 1925 and have one brother. As a kid, I was always interested in model trains. At that time, Walgreen's was only located in the Windy City. In 1936 they offered a promo, displayed in their store window – an American Flyer with a small steam-electric locomotive, a tender, two small passenger cars, and a circular track – and I wanted it. Walgreen's distributed small cards with writing in the middle and 25¢ squares around the perimeter. When all the squares were punched, you could purchase the set for \$2.95. I gave my card to my aunt who smoked a lot and bought her cigarettes at Walgreen's, so it didn't take long for her to get all the squares punched. I bought, played with and treasured that first train set until high school; then I lost

interest and pursued other things like football and jumping hurdles on the track team.

**WWII Service**: I joined the Coast Guard at age 17 and served in the Phillipine Islands on a Coast Guard-manned Army ammunition ship (FS-203) which served the infantry. Our ship happened to lodge on some coral, its nose went up, and we were stranded for over 2 days. One very dark night, my captain spotted movement on land and ordered me to fire a round from one of the carbine rifles in the direction of the movement. I did and the Japanese returned fire. They had about 11-12 outrigger canoes, each carrying 7-8 men. We exchanged fire with them from the carbines and our anti-aircraft guns. Several opposing forces didn't make it, the rest retreated, but we didn't lose one man. Thankfully, our ship got dislodged from the coral. My second ship was the USS Murzim (an AK-95, Crater-class cargo ship), and we delivered troops, goods and equipment to locations in the Asiatic Pacific Theater. (cont'd. on p. 4)



Flying bridge lookout



Above: TCA and NFVCC reps. donate \$16,000 check to Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Jax (story and additional photos on p. 3)

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The Southern Division Board of Directors, SD Webmaster, and *The Layout* Editor



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Address, Phone and/or Email Changes

Please inform Dienzel Dennis ASAP of any address, phone and/or email changes. If there's important division information and we need to get it to you, we must have your current info on file. Thank you.

<u>Check out the TCA's Social Media Pages</u> <u>Facebook</u>: Train Collectors Association TM *and* TCA-Train Collectors Association Toy Train Discussion <u>Instagram</u>: @TrainCollectors Association; and <u>Twitter</u>: @TCAnational Invite your relatives and friends to "Like" and "Follow" them.

Thank you again to the many who renewed your SD membership for 2021. Friendly reminder #2: You must be a TCA member in good standing to be a Southern Division member. SD Bylaws, Article III, Section 5 states, in part: "Any member whose TCA membership has been suspended or terminated is automatically and simultaneously dropped from SDTCA membership." If you did not renew your national membership, you're "dropped" from TCA's Active list; and national regularly sends the SD a list of the "dropped" SD members. Those SD members are then changed from Active status to Inactive status. A TCA and/or SD non-Active status person forfeits the: 1) *TCA Quarterly* and *National Headquarters News*, access to TCA's website, and convention attendance; 2) perk of getting a table at SD-sponsored meets; 3) perk of free admission to SD-sponsored meets; 4) perk of attending SD-sponsored, non-train events (e.g., open houses, banquets, subsidized parties); and 5) receipt of future SD correspondence, including *The Layout* (in which you can place a free ad for your trains). Keep in mind that <u>TCA membership renewal and SD membership renewal do not necessarily occur simultaneously</u> - so the onus is on each member.

Think of it this way: only \$5 per month covers your \$50 TCA and \$10 SD annual memberships!

#### President's Perspective by Mike Setzer

The Southern Division's first train show of 2021 was a success - see the photos on p. 5. The weather was perfect, attendees were happy to be there and ready to buy, table holders reported robust sales, and the barbeque was outstanding. The camaraderie of an in-person get together was critical to let folks know that the SD still is vibrant. And this outdoor show was *almost* like the early, grass-roots days of the division. We sincerely thank Dave and Gale Zitnik for letting us use their parking lot. I arrived early at the meet only to notice that several other table holders were already there and set up. Some think those folks arrived early to get the best spots, but I think they camped out overnight to be first in line for our traditional coffee and donuts for table holders, their family members, and their helpers.

We're excited about the new "Spotlight" feature in *The Layout*, and Irv Abelson was the perfect inaugural candidate. I know you'll enjoy his history.

The heartwarming story of the representatives from the TCA and the Jacksonville North Florida Village Collectors Club presenting a check to Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Jacksonville, reinforces TCA's commitment to contributing to and supporting worthy charitable organizations. We thank all involved who tirelessly worked to make it happen.

VP Mike Mills continues to search for a venue for the September 18 Orlando meet, and Jacksonville Meet Host Chuck Bryner is looking for a venue for the November 20 show. Check the website and future newsletters for the most up-todate info. If you have suggestions for a meet venue, please share them with any board member.

The latest news about the 2021 convention is that it's postponed until August. It's likely that the hotel will change and that the convention timeframe will be shortened to 4 or 5 days. If you've not already received it, TCA National will send another survey to all members who originally had indicated their plans to attend. Please respond to the survey ASAP.

I hope everyone remains healthy, and I look forward to seeing you in September. Mike

#### 2020 TCA Convention / D56 Gathering - Donation to Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Jacksonville by Steve Johnson



**Above, L-R:** Dr. Gary Josephson, Chief Medical Officer; Anita Sanford; and Larry Shughart

Proceeds from the Department 56 (D56) items donated for the auctions to be held at the 2020 Convention (Welcome Party and Banquet) were to be donated to a local charity after the convention. TCA typically keeps its auction proceeds as it is an IRS recognized public charity. There is no similar organization on a national level for D56 collectors, so D56 Gatherings typically designate a local charity to receive the proceeds of their auctions. Our 2020 convention committee and the North Florida Village Collectors Club (NFVCC) had selected Nemours Children's Specialty Care, Jacksonville, as our charity partner. Nemours was chosen because it offers several resources and support services to help children and families cope with the challenges of a chronic illness. From helping to coordinate temporary housing at a nearby Ronald McDonald House while children are receiving treatment, to providing child-approved pet therapy services and Child Life directed play therapy, its varied support services are available throughout a family's health care journey. It also has

a large train layout in its lobby with D56 buildings for the enjoyment of the children and their families. A group of volunteers (affectionately named the "Choo Choo Crew") has maintained the layout and changed it seasonally 4 times a year for the last 30 years. Since the convention was canceled, several convention committee members, including Larry Shughart (pictured below) and Fred

Gorbell, worked assiduously and sold all of the D56 donations on eBay. Many of the donations were intended to be given as door prizes but instead ended up being sold. That, along with the tremendously generous donation of a Voltamp train by a local family, generated a much higher donation than was originally anticipated. Greg Stout sold this at one of his auctions and donated his commission. This culminated in a ceremony at Nemours Jacksonville in January during which Larry, representing the TCA Convention Committee, and Anita Sanford, President of the NFVCC, presented Nemours staff with a check for \$16,000!

(see: http://nemours.mediaroom.com/media-releases?item=122854)



## "Spotlight" on Irv Abelson (cont'd. from cover)



Something struck me funny on a routine patrol.

**WWII** (cont'd.) During the service, I also trained as a boxer but never pursued it after the war ended. I was a Signalman Petty Officer Third Class (SM3) and proudly served from Jan. '43-Mar. '46, with 22 of those months in combat.

**Post War**: I went to college in Chicago on the GI Bill and earned a BS in Marketing. Here's kind of an interesting tidbit: the college was located on land once owned by Al Capone's lawyer. [Edward O'Hare, aka "Easy Eddie" (credit: Wikipedia)] Anyway, I ended up as a Charter Life Insurance Underwriter at a couple of companies for many years, and my territory covered 13 states. After all of the traveling I did, plus 28 years total in the business, I retired.

**Personal**: In Chicago, I went on a blind date with the woman who would become my wife. Harriet and I had two children, son Ward and daughter Stacy, who currently live in other states; and my son has two children. Sadly, my wife passed 17 years ago.

Trains: After the war and still living in Chicago, I went to a flea market and spotted 6-7 rail

Level cars for sale. They had been redone in colorful graphics, no track with them, and cost \$10. They intrigued me and rekindled my train interest, and I bought them. In 1982 a train guy friend invited me to a local train show and suggested I join the TCA as he was a member; and I did. I bought a vacation condo in St. Petersburg in 1983. I met another train guy (Ernie Howering, pictured far left in the photo on the right, now deceased) who suggested I join the Southern Division as he was a member. We became good friends and for several years went to York every April and October. Ernie was awarded Tinplate Tycoon status in 1989, and I in 2013. It was such an honor, and I proudly display the plaque in my condo. I briefly collected Z gauge trains but sold all of them.



My current collection, now confined to one bedroom of my apartment in Clearwater, strictly is pre-war O gauge. I've met so many great folks in the Southern Division and the TCA and enjoy going to local meets.

**Kids & Kubs**: When we moved into our condo in St. Petersburg, one of the neighbors asked if I played softball. I played a lot as a kid and enjoyed it, so I joined a league of age 55+ folks in 1983. By the time I moved to Clearwater, I was eligible to play in the Kids & Kubs league. Our club traveled to Pearl Harbor (United States vs. Japan), and the game was called in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning due to us having a 10-point lead. Three to four years later, we traveled to Hiroshima to play. It was WWII U. S. veterans who served in the South Pacific vs. Japanese veterans. Again the game was called in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning as we had a 10-point lead. I started out playing right field, then left field, then found my home in center field. I retired from playing in 2018 but miss the game and the camaraderie. (Eligibility for this league requires that folks be in their 74th year. Irv has been interviewed by several newspaper reporters who couldn't believe his agility, despite having to put on his glasses before throwing the ball from shortstop to second base!) See: https://www.jacksonville. com/prime-time/2017-01-17/florida-softball-league-87-many-players-are-even-older

I'm honored to be selected as the first "spotlight" person in *The Layout* and hope to see you soon at the meets. (I've had my vaccines.) *Inv* 

The Southern Division Board of Directors and *The Layout* Editor are grateful to Irv for his service to our country and also for his willingness to share his interesting history with us. If you'd like to nominate an SD member to be "spotlighted," please first contact the member to get their approval, then contact *The Layout* Editor: maryanyan.mia1@gmail.com 727-345-0288.

**Convention Souvenir Merchandise** 

You will probably notice that something is missing from this issue of *The Layout* because for the last seven issues we have prominently advertised the 2020 TCA Convention Department 56 Souvenir Water Towers and other convention souvenir merchandise for sale. We're happy to report that we are sold out of the towers! Actually, the last unsold tower was donated to the Nemours Children's Health System in Jacksonville for use on their train layout (see related story, p. 3). We thank everyone who purchased a tower and other convention merchandise and also thank Zitnik Trains for selling seven towers in their store for us from November 2020 through January 2021. The SD decided to donate the remainder of the merchandise to a worthy charity. *Bill Grappen* 



Minutes - TCA Southern Division Board of Directors Meeting January 21, 2021

A TCA SD BOD Meeting was held January 21, 2021, beginning at 3:00 PM EST. The meeting was called to order by President Mike Setzer.

Secretary Dienzel Dennis called roll with the following board members in attendance: President Setzer; Vice President Mike Mills; Secretary Dennis; Treasurer Mike Powell; Communications Officer Bill Trappen; Past Presidents Steve Johnson and Charlie Anyan. A quorum was present.

Guests: TCA National Vice President Jay Zschau; SD Webmaster Bill Porter; and The Layout Editor Mary Anyan

Mike Mills reported that he is ready and willing to assume his VP responsibilities and support the Southern Division in any way the board directs.

Dienzel Dennis reported that the current SD roster reflects 385 Active, 458 Inactive, and 89 Deceased members. This is a compilation since he became SD Secretary 12-15 years ago.

Motion by Bill Trappen: I move to accept the Secretary's Report. Motion unanimously passed.

Mike Powell reported that the SD 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Treasurer's Report reflects an increase of \$2820 for 2021 dues renewal and \$841.52 in expenses, with a total balance of \$17,351.08 in the budget. Upon board approval, the report will be included in the spring newsletter.

Motion by Dienzel Dennis: I move to accept the SD 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Treasurer's Report. Motion unanimously passed.

(cont'd. on p. 6)

## Minutes - TCA Southern Division Board of Directors Meeting, January 21, 2021 (cont'd. from p. 5)

Bill Trappen reported: 1) He had meet flyers copied for the January 23 Fort Pierce meet which were distributed December 5 at the Melbourne show, along with 200 copies given to Gerry Groothouse which he was planning to distribute at the Martin County train show January 16-17, as the decision to cancel the Fort Pierce meet was made after the flyers were distributed at the Melbourne show; 2) He prepared a handout giving a summary of the TCA and SD as well as a Calendar of Planned TCA SD Train Shows, which were copied and distributed by Mike Setzer at the Martin County show; 3) He prepared and emailed mailing labels to the SD's printer for those members who elect to receive *The Layout* by U. S. mail; 4) Less than a handful of convention water towers remain available for purchase. Zitnik Trains employees sold four more at the store, and the SD still has ads on the SD website and Facebook page.

Bill Porter reported: 1) The website is operating well; 2) He plans an overhaul of the site within the next quarter; 3) the SD's free PayPal account will be operational until the end of August 2021.

Mary Anyan reported: 1) Items for the spring newsletter are due to her not later than March 1 for distribution on/around April 1; 2) In an effort to attempt to reduce the cost of mailing *The Layout*, she contacted a representative at the U. S. Postal Service's bulk mail department. The representative advised her that if the printing company currently employed by the SD uses a post office service called Full-Service Mailing (FSM), the bulk mail rate no longer will be required, saving the SD \$240 per year. The printer currently does not utilize the FSM but is willing to have a postal representative visit her to explain the protocol and software so that she may begin using it.

Charlie Anyan reported that meet host Guy Ateniese has received 14 table registration forms for the March 7 outdoor meet at Zitnik Trains. As reported and approved by the board in the November 20, 2020, board meeting minutes, there will be no board or business meeting prior to this meet. In the interest of safety, there will be no door prize distribution. A discussion followed regarding an on-site food truck or grilling hot dogs and distributing them at no charge, and TCA liability for either option. (Update: Mr. Anyan met with Dave Zitnik who advised that with either option, the TCA assumes no liability as it is either the food truck vendor or a Zitnik Trains employee who will be involved with food preparation and distribution.)

Mike Mills reported that September 18 tentatively is selected for the Orlando area meet. As the middle school venue representative cannot commit at this time, Mr. Mills continues to research other venues. The board discussed the SD's practice of distributing a free toy to every child who enters a meet as well as door prize drawings throughout the meet and decided against both, in the interest of safety.

Steve Johnson reported that if a venue can be secured, the Jacksonville meet will be held November 20. The Morocco Shrine Auditorium sale remains pending; however, no events are being booked after June. Meet host Chuck Bryner continues to research other venues.

The board discussed a Fort Pierce meet for January 22, 2022, and updates will appear on the SD website and in future newsletters.

The board again briefly discussed the need for four "Admin" bins, one to be kept at each meet venue, and concluded that this subject can be revisited during a future board meeting.

The board again briefly discussed SD shirts, caps, visors, etc., as income-generating ideas and concluded that this subject can be revisited during a future board meeting. The board welcomes member input.

Jay Zschau reported that on December 15, 2020, TCA approved the SD's proposed revisions to its bylaws, and those bylaws can be found on the SD website. As the board received no member objections to the proposed revisions (posted in the winter issue of *The Layout*) by January 11, the revisions are considered approved by the general membership and became effective January 1, 2021.

Jay Zschau reported that a request by TCA to the SD president was made to nominate SD member Bob Mintz for TCA Treasurer. A discussion followed.

Motion by Steve Johnson: I move that the Southern Division president nominate Bob Mintz for TCA Treasurer. Motion passed by quorum.

Jay Zschau reported that the 2021 TCA Convention, scheduled to be held in June in Irvine, California, currently is on hold and possibly may be rescheduled to later in the year.

Adjournment: 4:30 PM EST

Respectfully submitted: Dienzel Dennis Secretary

# Upcoming Florida Train Meets/Shows

## Check first with the meet/show hosts for the latest updates by phoning or referring to websites.

<u>Apr. 3</u>: Train Show/Swap Meet, Lopez Hall, 7177 58th St. N, **Pinellas Park** 33781, 9A-2P, adults \$5/children 12 & under *free*, Early Bird reservation 8-9A \$7; vendors and model train layout; lunch available <u>joe@regalrailways.com</u>, 727-244-1341; <u>www.regalrailways.com</u> (Regal Railways)

<u>Apr. 10-11</u>: Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, Lawrence Arena, 3150 E. New York Ave., Deland 32724,10A-6P, Charles Miller 703-536-2954, <u>rrshows@aol.com, www.gserr.com</u> (Golden Spike) CANCELED

May 22: Train Show/Swap Meet, Hernando County Fairgrounds, 6436 Broad St., Brooksville 34601 (Regal Railways)

Jun. 5: Train Show, Azan Shrine Center, 1591 W. Eau Gallie Blvd., Melbourne 32935, 9A-2P, call 321-805-1963, schultzspacecoasttrains@aol.com (Schultz Space Coast Trains)

Jun. 26: Train Show/Swap Meet, Christ Lutheran Church, 3451 30th Ave. N, St. Petersburg 33713 (Regal Railways)

<u>Jun. 26-27</u>: 30th Annual Tallahassee Model Railroad Show & Sale, 441 Paul Russell Rd., **Tallahassee** 32301, Sat. 9A-5P, Sun. 10A-4P, Entry \$10 for both days, 12 and under *free;* Andy Zimmerman 850-524-4399, <u>bbmra.club.com</u> (Big Bend Model Railroad Association - *First two-day show!*)

Jul.10: Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, Lawrence Arena, 3150 E. New York Ave., Deland 32724 (Golden Spike)

Aug. 28: Train Show/Swap Meet, Lopez Hall, 7177 58th St. N., Pinellas Park 33781 (Regal Railways)

Sep. 4: Train Show, Azan Shrine Center, 1591 W. Eau Gallie Blvd., Melbourne 32935 (Schultz Space Coast Trains)

Sep. 11: Train Show/Swap Meet, Hernando County Fairgrounds, 6436 Broad St., Brooksville 34601 (Regal Railways)

Sep. 18: Orlando area (Southern Division) (Meet Story and Table Registration Form in the summer newsletter)

Oct. 2: Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, Lawrence Arena, 3150 E. New York Ave., Deland 32724 (Golden Spike)

Nov. 20: Jacksonville (Southern Division) (Meet Story and Table Registration Form in the fall newsletter)

Nov. 20: Train Show/Swap Meet, Columbian Club of Osceola, 2000 Neptune Rd., Kissimmee 34744 (Regal Railways)

Dec. 4: Train Show, Azan Shrine Center, 1591 W. Eau Gallie Blvd., Melbourne 32935 (Schultz Space Coast Trains)

Dec. 11: Train Show/Swap Meet, Hillsborough County Fairgrounds, 215 Sydney Washer Rd., Dover 33527 (Regal Railways)

Please send notices of upcoming Florida train meets/shows to Mary Anyan, maryanyan.mia1@gmail.com.

**Promotion and Attendance at Train Meets:** In order to promote awareness and thus attendance, we list a schedule of upcoming shows on our Southern Division website as well as in each quarter's *The Layout*. We also promote these meets with flyers about upcoming shows available at other train shows, thus marketing to folks who already have evidenced an interest in trains by attending the show. We are looking for TCA SD members to assist in that distribution. If you plan to attend any train-related meets, shows or other events, please contact **Bill Trappen** (<u>bill9678@aol.com</u> or phone 407-365-7860). Bill will get flyers to you to take to the meets and leave out for others. If possible, please give Bill at least 10 days' notice to ensure he has time to get the flyers to you. Thanks for your help.

Train Collectors Associati Southern Division 1800 Follow-Thru Road N. St. Petersburg, FL 33710- The deadline for articles, for the next issue of The for the next issue of The June 1, 2021.	3724 photos, etc.	Non-Profit Organization US Postage Paid Permit #717 St. Petersburg, FL 33730-9541
For sale: 671/671W engine-\$95; 6 3461 log dump car-\$24; 3361 lo gondola w/4 canisters-\$15; Lione boxed-\$525; 1688/1689T black-\$75 17548 flat w/"Edsels" (Route 66 se or email for info & photos. Cha	bg dump car-\$28; 6162 blue el set #51000 Hiawatha, new, 5; set 2125WS, 1947 only \$150; ries)NIB-\$35; many others, call	I am always looking to <b>buy</b> pre-war, post-war and modern era O gauge trains as well as G gauge and Marklin trains. I am in Hobe Sound in Southeast Florida. Al Galli, 772-219-7653, <u>algalli@embarqmail.com</u>
<u>canyan1@tamp</u> Are you ready to Sell or Thin out your Train and Toy collections? Please call Dick Wilsen (Sarasota), 941-374-2288.		
For Sale: Williams #803 and#804 New York Central 80-ft. Painted and Plated 6-car Passenger Sets. Mint Never Run. Original New packaging \$360 each. Shipping and Insurance	dswitchers, no controllers - \$40/p1 pr. American Flyer switchersg.26744 w/box - \$16; 771 AF repl	redone. Single motor, \$25; Double motor, \$40 (includes general servicing and

Note: per TCA rules and regulations, your full name must be listed and the words "make offer" cannot appear. Email <u>maryanyan.mia1@gmail.com</u> or U. S. mail, 1800 Follow-Thru Rd. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33710