



December 2016, Houston Area Live Steamers, Volume 2016 Issue 12, Rick White, Editor

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**The Presidential Siding**

**December 2016**

Hello all,

It has been quite a year, we lost Ed Rains and Dan Douglas who passed on, we had turmoil with the County, and we had two 500 year floods within a few weeks of each other. On the other hand we had an excellent year with ridership on Public Run Days, beautiful weather after everything dried out, and due to extraordinary efforts by many members, I believe the track is in the best shape it has been for quite some time. There is still more to do in that area as is always the case, check out Sand Springs / Blacks Crossing, etc. They are really in good shape.

Peter Bryan was awarded the Marshal Black / Lee Balkum Award for 2015. Gary Brothers was awarded the Marshal Black / Lee Balkum Award for 2016.

The Anniversary Meet was one of the largest we have ever had. Huge Thanks go out to Greg Moore and ALL of the Members that made it possible. It was an excellent Meet and one that will be tough to recreate again this year. Anyone out there interesting in giving Greg a break this year?

And last but not least we have new Board of Directors with a couple of new members who appear to be motivated and ready to get to work starting in January. As the returning President for 2017, I very much look forward to working with them all and hope you will support the Board as we move forward.

Since my last update, there has been quite a bit of action on putting together the drawing package for remainder of the New Car Barn. Specially the concrete to support the Transfer Table, the Transfer Table, Lead in track, etc. Dennis Cranston has been working with an engineering company called Morris & Associates on this. They have significant experience working with Harris County in the permitting process and are providing us advice, engineering assistance, drafting assistance, etc. We will have a detailed

update during the January General Membership Meeting. We will also be asking for approval to compensate Morris & Associates for the assistance we have received from them at that January Meeting. We believe this is the best, most productive way to proceed and appreciate your continued support.

I hope we have a better year weather wise this year. We have spent an inordinate amount of time working on track and too little time in running trains. While Public Run Days bring us donations to keep us going financially, we need to spend more time on other activities. Our Operations Days are a great way to learn (or remember) how cars are moved around to meet the requirements of those cars owners. It is also a great way to improve your engine operating skills.

When was the last time you took your children, spouses, neighbors, whomever out for a ride just because? Teach that teenager how to operate an engine. Teach your neighbor. How many time have you seen or heard about Tomas and family, or Caleb and family, or others that just come out to run their engines and ride around the track just for the pleasure of doing so? We do not have to wait for meets to come out.

Have a Birthday Party, Anniversary, whatever, at the track, Ice Cream Social some Saturday? Any good ideas out there?

In closing I hope you all had good and safe Holidays and I am looking forward to 2017!

Hope to see you on the rails!

**Bill Smith**

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

## Upcoming HALS Events

Date	Description
<b>January 2017</b>	
<b>January 7</b>	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
<b>January 21</b>	Work Day
<b>January 23</b>	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
<b>January 28</b>	OPS Day 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM
<b>February 2017</b>	
<b>February 4</b>	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
<b>February 18</b>	HALS at Greater Houston Train Show
<b>February 20</b>	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
<b>February 23-25</b>	Chugga Chugga Chili Fest
<b>March 2017</b>	
<b>March 4</b>	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
<b>March 11</b>	Work Day, prepare for public run day.
<b>March 18</b>	Public Run Day 9 AM to 2 PM
<b>March 25</b>	OPS Day
<b>March 27</b>	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
<b>April 2017</b>	
<b>April 1</b>	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
<b>April 15</b>	Public Run Day 9 AM to 2 PM

<b>April 24</b>	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
<b>May 2017</b>	
<b>May 6</b>	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
<b>May 20</b>	Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
<b>May 22</b>	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
<b>May 25-28</b>	Memorial Day Weekend Meet.
<b>June 2017</b>	
<b>June 3</b>	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
<b>June 17</b>	Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
<b>June 26</b>	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
<b>July 2017</b>	
<b>July 8</b>	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
<b>July 15</b>	Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
<b>July 24</b>	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park
<b>August 2017</b>	
<b>August 5</b>	Work Day (9:00 AM) & General Membership Meeting (01:00 PM)
<b>August 19</b>	Public Run Day 9 AM to 1 PM
<b>August 28</b>	Board Meeting 7 PM at Zube Park

## Rain Out Day with Deer and Puddles

December 3, 2016

Rick White

The rains came and the puddles formed. Lucky us, we got to see deer run across the track and away from us. The work day and meeting were cancelled.



Deer crossing the track at Black's Crossing.  
Lots of puddles.



Deer running away from us humans in the station.  
Lots of water just past the left hand deer.



Phase I infield has the puddles.



Water in the infield of Phase I.

## **New Car Barn Doors**

**December 11, 2016**

**Doug Blodgett**

The doors have finally been installed on the new car barn. I'm not sure when they were installed as I wasn't at the track last weekend but I noticed that one door was down yesterday and decided that this milestone should be recorded. We still have a long way to go to be operational out there but all progress is welcome.



## **Broken throttle in 7113**

**December 2016**

**Doug Blodgett**

For the last year I have noticed that slack has been steadily increasing in the throttle of my Mikado to the point that it sometimes cannot be fully shut off, causing the engine to creep unless I put it in neutral. Conversely, I had to pull the throttle lever out quite a ways before the engine started to move which made it quite difficult to drive.

Yesterday I finally got in the smokebox and pulled the quarter turn gate valve I use as a throttle and took it apart. You can see in the photos that a crack has developed in a little arm that controls the valve action. This has created the slop in the throttle and is probably not worth the effort to repair it.

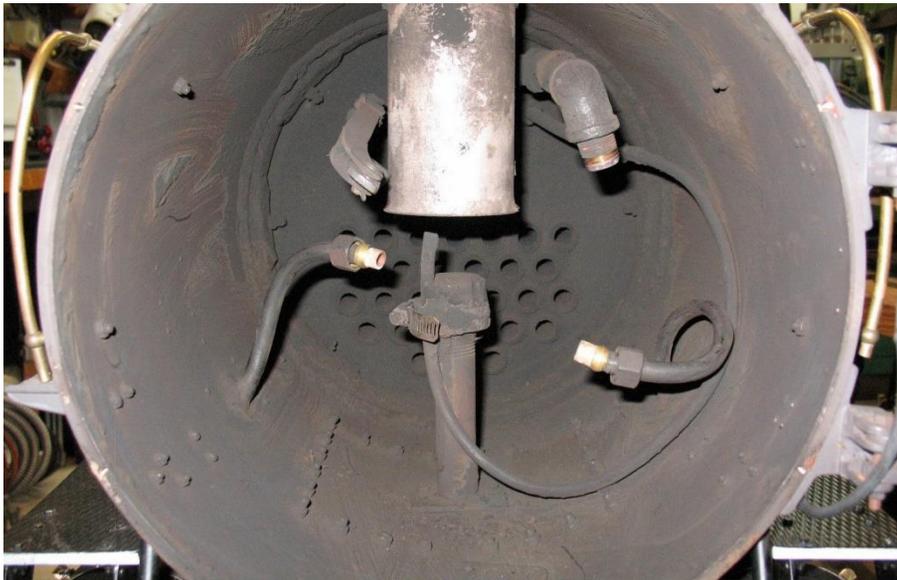
I am investigating different throttle valves for now and will have to install something else. The gate valve was supposed to be a great idea but I'm not happy with its performance in this case.

### **Response from Carl Garrett:**

It's interesting that someone manufactured a gate valve for this application. Gate valves are best used in the fully open and fully closed positions. If a gate valve is left partially open, the gate will vibrate and may become damaged. However, quarter-turn ball valves are known for their longevity.

### **My reply:**

I suppose vibration could have damaged the link. I just assumed it was too much pressure exerted on the quarter turn lever. I purchased this from another club member several years ago who bought it from a live steam supplier. At the time, it was supposed to be the best thing going but it was too large for the engine my friend was building so I thought it would be good in my own engine. I'm currently looking at ball valves, which seem to be the most popular choice for locomotives in our scale. McMaster Carr has some bronze ones that are specifically for steam, but I'm a bit worried about the brass balls they use in them. Any thoughts?



## Track Work

**Saturday, December 17, 2016**

**Peder Serkland**

For as rough as the weather forecast was, we had a great turnout at Zube last Saturday. Gary Brothers, Dennis Cranston, and Randy Neville were out working on the engines while Bill Howe, JB Cason, Doug Blodgett, and I worked on track around the car barn.

Bill was able to get the switch leading to the transfer table operating much better. This turned out to be a fair sized job so many thanks!. I heard one squawk, Bill, that a little more adjustment may be needed yet to get the points to close reliably in one direction (the other direction works well).

The track alongside the car barn has been ballasted, lined, and tamped for the full length along the side of the car barn. Doug filled the tipple while JB ran ballast to me to finish what couldn't be done the previous weekend. There is still a short section that would be

nice to clean up between the barn and the transfer table ramp, though. That will be a little more involved as the track needs to meet the fixed height of ramp without increasing the angular connection from ground to ramp.

I spoke with Brent Lowry on continuing the excellent work he's been doing on the drainage ditch retaining wall and he expects to get things moving again mid to end of January.

I'm shutting down for Christmas, but hope to be back at things New Year's weekend. There is plenty of work needed on the track and we have two large projects to try and move forward: New car barn and the swale bridge. Dan Droogleever did a great job on getting people moving on the bridge about this time last year but now we need someone to pick up the torch. Anyone looking for a New Year's resolution?

## 5321 Drive System

### December 22, 2016

### Gary Brothers

JB Cason and I got 5321 loaded into my truck. At my shop, I had a special unloading ramp because my truck bed is higher than the engine stand.

- Photos are of the engine using my hoist to lift engine high enough to roll both the power trucks out from under it.

- I had to take cab end truck partially apart to remove it. The hairpin clip is hard to get to otherwise. The power truck is filthy and has small twigs and grass tangled in the chain sprockets. The chain very loose and will be tightened up like other truck.
- I put a pair of trucks under engine while I work on the drive lines.



I took both trucks to Zube on Monday the 26th, soaked both in kerosene, pressure washed them, put some degreaser on them, and pressure washed them again. Not perfect, but much cleaner. Will next work on them on the 29<sup>th</sup> with Randy Neville.



Truck all cleaned up with drive shaft laying on truck beside old gear box.



New drive shafts with universals.  
December 30, 2016



## **Dan Douglas**

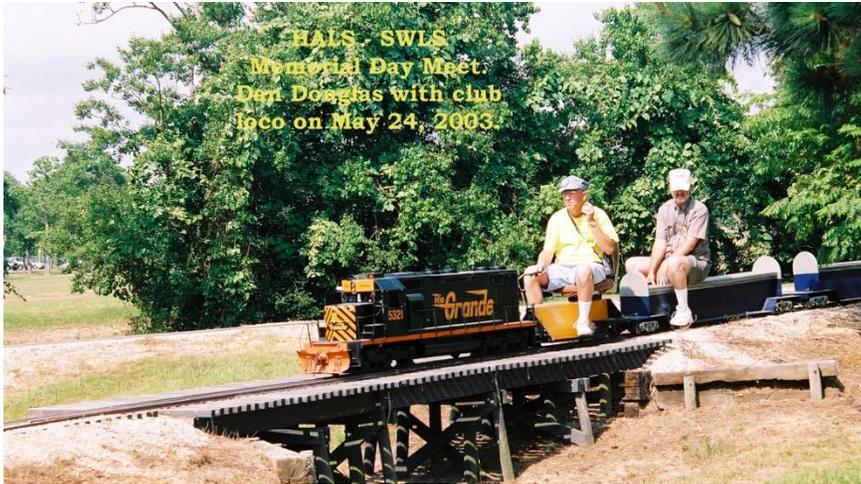
### **December 24, 2016**

On December 24<sup>th</sup>, Chris Schieck gave us the sad news "I am sorry to have to report that former HALS member Dan Douglas passed away this afternoon. Dan was a regular operator on the Forest & Western Basement and Backyard Divisions and several other model railroads in the Richmond, Charlottesville and Lynchburg, Virginia area. He will be sorely missed. Please keep Dan and Maxine in your thoughts and prayers."

In memory of happier times, some photos of Dan and Maxine at HALS Christmas parties. I remember Dan for all the parts of HALS that he painted for us. What a trooper! Many a public run day Dan has been a conductor and engineer, giving smiles to many many children who ride our trains.

Dan, you will be missed.

On December 26<sup>th</sup> Chris Schieck reported that Dan Douglas's son Nathan called Christmas Day to say there are no immediate funeral service plans for Dan. They will probably schedule a memorial service around a family reunion later. Maxine has relatives in Virginia and Houston, and Dan has relatives in Houston and California, so the service might be held in Virginia or Texas. The family was preparing an obituary on Christmas Day.



SWLS Meet May 24, 2003



November 21, 2009, Public Run Day



November 21, 2009, Public Run Day



February 27, 2010, Chili Fest, Dan & Maxine



July 17, 2010, Public Run Day



November 20, 2010, Public Run Day



Left: December 6, 2010, Christmas Party



Above: June 18, 2011, Public Run Day



May 5, 2012, Work Day



August 20, 2011, Public Run Day



December 3, 2012, Christmas Party with Maxine and Dan



Dan Douglas running trains and working on Chris Schieck's Forest & Western Railroad

Daniel Randolph Douglas, 70 years old, husband of Maxine Potter Douglas of Fishersville passed away Saturday, December 24, 2016 at the University Virginia Hospital in Charlottesville. Dan was born October 26, 1946 in Morristown, New Jersey. He is the son of late Nellie Clarke Douglas and Randolph Angus Douglas.

Dan received his Bachelor's Degree in Business from Bloomfield College in New Jersey, and retired from IBM and Hewlett Packard. Dan enjoyed reading history books, modeling trains and supporting local fire departments and rescue squads. He belonged to the Augusta County Railroad Museum in Staunton, Virginia and the Houston Area Live Steamers in Hockley, Texas. He frequently attended model railroad operations sessions with fellow modelers in the Charlottesville, Richmond, and Lynchburg areas.

Surviving children are son Nathan Douglas and his wife Kimberly of Houston, Texas, son Benjamin Douglas of San Diego, California, son Christopher Stokes and his wife Leann of Houston, Texas and daughter Ann Wallace and her husband David of Houston, Texas. Surviving grandchildren are Scott Douglas, Sean Douglas, Kaylah Douglas, Kalyssa Douglas, Jonathan Douglas, Kristina Douglas, Ava Douglas, Bailee Straight, Katey Miille, Kyle Stokes, Jesslyn Royster, and Ashlee Royster. Dan's surviving siblings are sister Jill Hopper and husband Emory of Randolph, Vermont and sister Kate Croy of Nashville, Tennessee, as well as many nieces and nephews.

Dan lived a fulfilling life with diabetes for 66 years after being diagnosed as a young child. He ultimately succumbed to heart complications. It was his desire to have his body sent to the

State Anatomical Program of Virginia. A memorial service will be scheduled at a later date. The family requests that any donations be made to the Augusta County Fire & Rescue - Station 11 at 2015 Jefferson Highway, Fishersville, Virginia.

Published in The News Leader

## 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 January Stack Talk

Work Days for January

Your Project

Track Work reports from Peder Serkland and others.

More on 5321 upgrades from Gary Brothers.

## 2017 HALS Board of Directors

<b>President</b>	Bill Smith
<b>V.P. Operations</b>	Bob Barnett
<b>V.P. Facilities</b>	Spence Gaskin
<b>V.P. Track &amp; Right of Way</b>	
<b>V.P. Motive Power &amp; Equipment</b>	
<b>Secretary</b>	Rick White
<b>Treasurer</b>	Dennis Cranston
<b>Former President</b>	Pete Greene
<b>V.P. Communications</b>	Open – main duty is writing Stack Talk and taking photos for it.
<b>V.P. Manpower</b>	Rich Businger
<b>Senior Director</b>	Connor Witkowski
<b>Junior Director</b>	JB Cason

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

## Editor's Comments

Family events fill December and we slack off on our HALS activities. That makes a project report like Doug Blodgett's all the more interesting. If you take family to the track for a fun run, photos would be welcome.

Loosing another HALS member is never fun, but going back over years of photos to find those of Dan Douglas brought back many memories. Strangely, I found no photos of Dan painting, which is

one of most memory engraved images: painting Hunter Green along the ramp leading to the transfer table.

Rick White, Stack Talk Editor

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

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

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

**NOTE: No Login required**



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## 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**



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