



March 2015

Bowser has announced upcoming HO scale models of New Orleans

## Traction Action at Del Mar, California!

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The Southern California Traction Club took their show on the road this month to the Del Mar Fairgrounds for the Great Train Show, which would be the club's 112th public appearance. February 14-15, 2015 would be the first return of the SCTC to the Del Mar/San Diego Area in almost two years. The club found itself in a position often experienced by other clubs these days. There were only four members available to set up the modules for the show in Friday afternoon. One of those members also is a vendor at the show and had to devote some time to the setting up of his booth. The club had five members on hand for teardown on Sunday. As the members of these traditional clubs get older and new members become scarcer, the future for a lot of model railroad clubs does not look good. Meanwhile.....

The show on Saturday was as one would expect with over 3,000 people in attendance. Sunday attendance was hampered by a foot race that virtually closed the main gate to the Fairgrounds until the show opened. Vendors and layout operators were forced to detour about five extra miles to enter the grounds through an emergency gate. The "Honorary Operator" Program, which allows selected show visitors to operate the DCC-controlled streetcars was not employed at this appearance due to the lack of resources but it is hoped that it can be resumed at the next club appearance.

At this show, to attempt to make the layout more relevant to the general public, the club attempted to display streetcars from the past and present from the local area. The new LRV display, still under development was used to highlight San Diego Light Rail Vehicles and the club is fortunate to have one of the rare brass models of one of their SD-100s.

The model shown at right is a brass HO scale model of one of the 52 SD-100 cars still operated by the San Diego Metropolitan Transportation System (SDMTS). The model was produced by MTS Imports, Inc, now out of business. This was one of their last models imported. These 52 cars were purchased in October 1993 and are 76 feet long and weigh 89,000 pounds each. The San Diego System runs on 600 volts.



These are now the oldest cars on the system since the Siemens U-2 cars made their last revenue runs in January. They are supplemented by 11 Siemens SD-70 cars (series 3001-3011) purchased in October 2004 and 65 SD-70 cars (series 4001-4065) obtained in 2012-2013. The 4001 series are 9.3 feet shorter than the 3001 series to prevent blocking two intersections at the same time when trains of three cars are used.

The club made extensive use of their new LRV Display modules showing post 1980 traction vehicles such as the Boeing SLRV that ran in San Francisco and Boston, the Breda LRVs currently operating in San Francisco. Unfortunately, models of currently used light rail vehicles in the United States do not exist for some reason. Note the display in the foreground of the club display shown in the next photograph.



Contrary to the rest of the layout which is DCC and overhead wire only, the LRV Display can operate cars using two-rail or overhead wire, DC or DCC. Dave Lyman, a club member who specializes in San Diego transit modeling, brought his cars on Sunday for club operation. All three cars, San Diego Electric Railway 426, Southeastern 102 and 107 are shown in the next photo in front of the barn along with a Los Angeles Transit Lines PCC.



San Diego Cars, 416 and 503 were also displayed on the Custom Traxx display module:



The club hopes to continue its mission along with the fun of operating model traction from live overhead wires. If you live in the Southern California area, they could use your support.

## Streetcars in the Motor City!

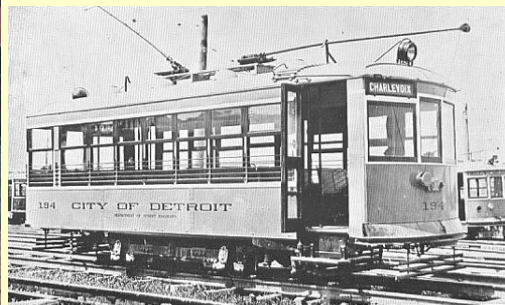
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by Edward Havens

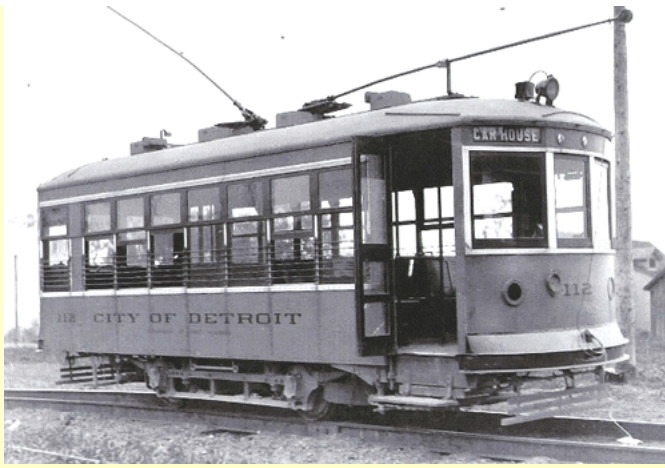
Detroit is currently recreating its street railway past by building a 3.3-mile, \$140 million modern streetcar line on Woodward Avenue that is financed mostly with private money. Woodward was the last car line abandoned by Detroit Department of Street Railways (DSR) in April 1956 although at that time the route ran all the way from downtown to the state fairgrounds at Eight Mile, the city line.



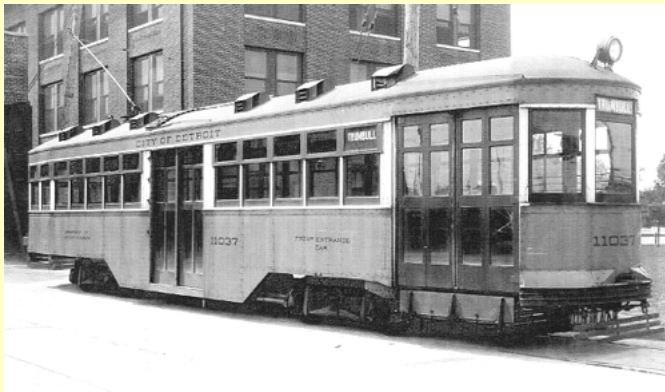
The President's Conference Committee streetcar (better known as the P.C.C.) was the last "light rail" vehicle to operate along the streets of Detroit when service ceased in 1956. One of these cars is shown below left:



In January 1921, the city Department of Street Railways took over lines of Detroit United Railway and was commissioned to build new car lines. The first service was provided by city-purchased four-wheel Birneys. One of them is shown above right and another below. According to the Detroit Transit History web site, The new thirty-two passenger Birney streetcars arrived sporting the city-run transit system's first adopted paint scheme of straw yellow body, brown doors and windows with cream trimming, and black running gear (under carriage). They were built by Osgood Bradley of Worcester, Mass. Detroit eventually bought 250 Birney Safety Cars from McGuire-Cummings, J. G. Brill and St. Louis Car Co in addition to Osgood Bradley.



The first Peter Witt-style four-axle cars, 50 units, were ordered from Kuhlman, a Brill subsidiary, in 1921.



Peter Witt streetcars delivered later were built in a style which would become unique to Detroit. This preserved car now is in the Illinois Railway Museum collection.



Ohio Railway Museum near Columbus also has preserved one of the Detroit Peter Witt Cars:



Ultimately, Detroit would purchase and use 781 Peter Witts. These 52-passenger cars, built by the St. Louis Car Company, were 48' 6" long and 8' 6" wide.

In August 1945, Detroit ordered two air-electric PCC cars from St. Louis Car Co., a type characterized in their pre-war body styling by the lack of standee windows. Initially, they were numbered 100 and 101. Number 100 later was renumbered 141.



The PCC trials with the two cars were so successful that in October 1945, Detroit ordered 78 PCCs from the same manufacturer. The new fleet arrived between May and October 1947, were numbered 102 to 140 and 142 to 180 and assigned to the heavily traveled Woodward Avenue line. These standee window equipped PCCs seated 50 passengers and were the standard 46' 5" length and 8' 4" width for the cars at that time.



In April 1949, the city authorized \$2.7 million to buy more PCCs from St. Louis Car Co. to modernize additional lines. A total of 106 PCCs were eventually ordered and they arrived between August and October of 1949. These would be the last streetcars to be purchased by the Department of Street Railways. These cars were longer and wider than the standard all-electric design at 49' 5" long and 8' 8" wide and would be numbered 181-286. Sharp-eyed readers will notice an extra window behind the center door.



By January 1950, the Woodward, Jefferson, Gratiot and Michigan lines were 100% PCC operated.

Some Peter Witt cars remained in service as peak period trippers on these lines. In 1953, DSR general manager Leo Nowicki launched a campaign to convert the entire system to buses, citing motor coach "flexibility" and savings on track renewal. By fall 1955, only two car lines were left. In mid-October, a deal was struck to sell 183 PCCs to Mexico City. The Gratiot line was converted to buses March 25, 1956 and Woodward was set to fall to rubber tired transit two weeks later. Ralifans held excursions as the end drew near. Note the highest numbered PCC car on the point in the next photograph:



The end came on April 8, 1956. At left is one of the 24 street-cars participating in the "End of the Line" Parade on April 8, 1956!

(Photo source New Dave's Electric Railroads —Stephen M. Scalzo collection)

The distinctive cream and red livery of Detroit's PCCs is remembered today by San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency [SFMTA or Muni] which painted one of its ex--Twin Cities PCCs in Detroit's final livery. Note Detroit PCC 217 below left and San Francisco Municipal Railway's 1079 at right:



Trolley modelers have the option of painting a post-war PCC model in HO or O scales in Detroit livery. However to our knowledge, the extra-long PCCs from Detroit's second order have never been available from model manufacturers. St. Petersburg Tram Collection of Russia produced unpowered, museum quality models in 1:48 O scale of the Detroit air-electrics and the standard length all-electric PCCs. Corgi imported die cast, unpowered 1:50 scale versions of the Detroit standee window PCC and they could be motorized. The Corgi model shown below left was powered by GHB trucks:



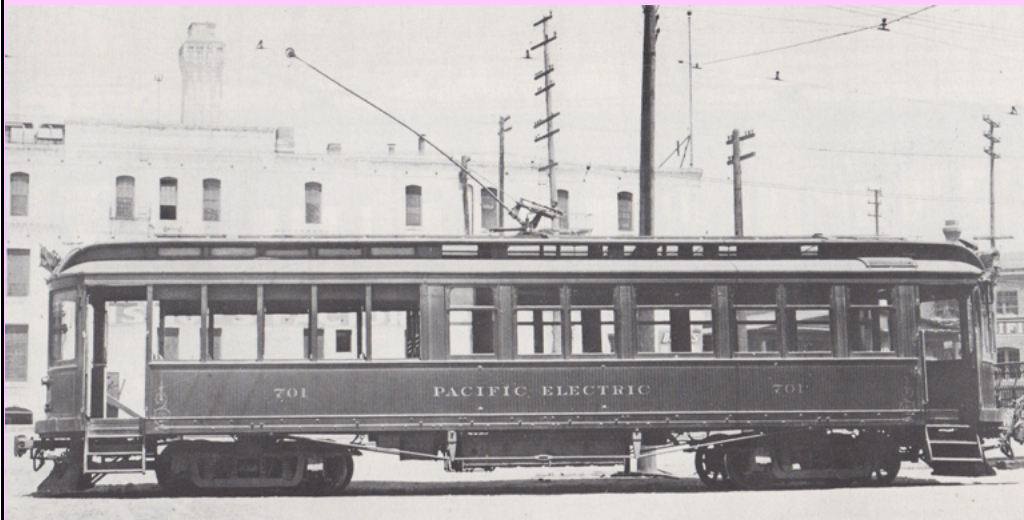
Bowser Manufacturing Co. of Montoursville, Pa., offered a ready-to-run 1:87 HO scale version, shown above right. Although the Bowser Detroit livery car is currently listed by the manufacturer as sold out, we are aware that Custom Traxx and other dealers may have some of them. The Detroit Peter Witts would have to be scratch built but the Birneys could be kit bashed from four-wheel Birneys imported over the years by various firms in HO or O scales.

## Richard Allman's Pacific Electric 950!

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Pacific Electric car 965 has entered operation on Main Line Transit. The prototype was one of 50 cars built by St. Louis Car Company in 1907 for a predecessor to Pacific Electric, the Los Angeles Pacific (LAP). The series would later be known as the 950 series. Originally they were numbered 700-749 on the LAP. The next photo shows car 701 at the Pacific Electric Shops at 7th & Alameda in 1911. Notice the open section, the spoked wheels, the single trolley pole and the fender.



They were classic wood interurban cars, equipped for multiple unit operation and often operated in multi-car trains. They were initially assigned to the Los Angeles-Pasadena service but when newer cars arrived in 1924, the 950's were assigned to the heavy Venice Short Line, from Los Angeles to Venice Beach on a route mainly on Venice Boulevard. They ran this service until its conversion to bus operation in December 1950, after which all the 950 cars, the oldest on Pacific Electric in the post-war era, were scrapped. Pacific Electric was a vast system reaching as far south as Newport Beach in Orange County, far east into San Bernardino County, to the west to Venice and Santa Monica, south to San Pedro, Long Beach,

Santa Ana and Whittier, several routes to Hollywood and Beverly Hills, and north into Van Nuys in the San Fernando Valley. Surviving post-war lines included two routes to Pasadena, several to Venice and Santa Monica, north to Glendale and Burbank, the very heavy services to Long Beach and Bellflower, and San Pedro, and the Hollywood Blvd. lines. Pacific Electric according to William Middleton, the premier scholar on US Interurban trolley operations, accounted for almost 10% of total assets of all interurban lines in the United States.

Beginning in the 1930's and steadily after World War 2, with cheap gasoline, an expanding freeway system, and age and deteriorating condition of the Pacific Electric rolling stock and right-of-way, PE was gradually converted to bus operation. The last cars on the PE ran on the LA-Long Beach via Watts line in 1961, after the remnants of the system had been acquired by Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority, a sad ending for a system that as late as 1945 encompassed more than 900 single track miles, 2550 daily passenger trains into and out of Los Angeles and operated almost 500 cars. Pacific Electric built Los Angeles into a far-flung metropolis, but became obsolete. Except for the 30 PCC cars on the Glendale Burbank service, the cars were old, the newest being the 150 Hollywood cars and the huge late 1920's "Blimp" cars which were more than 30 years old. Since the mid 1980's billions of dollars have been spent building a vast, admittedly world-class electrified rail rapid transit system for Los Angeles. Overall, they have gotten it right with lines connecting Los Angeles to Long Beach, Hollywood, Pasadena, Redondo Beach, Santa Monica, East LA with more to come, including Santa Monica, Monrovia and even a line along Crenshaw Boulevard. Do many of these destinations sound familiar? What Los Angeles has done is essentially rebuild portions of the Pacific Electric and Los Angeles Railway lines!

Now to the model The car was a brass model imported from Japan in the 1960's by Ed Suydam, who furnished brass models of many PE prototypes. Many of these cars were purchased and sat on shelves in collectors' closets, unpainted and never operated. Since many of these collectors have died over the years, some of the cars have become available in estate sales. I acquired mine last winter at an auction at Maurer's in Spring City, PA which was a 3 Saturday sale of enormous numbers of brass cars. Wonder what the guy who owned them was thinking in buying literally thousands of models! OK, some of it was an investment: the Suydam cars originally sold new for \$35-50 each. Maybe I should have invested in more of them, compared to other investments! I also got a Hollywood car and a 1200 series Long Beach car. The details on the brass are amazing, but 40 + years in boxes take a toll. First to be done was to clean the brass body. This involved soaking in household vinegar for an hour then cleaning with brass polish, and then priming. The drives in the cars for the most part performed best when left in the original boxes. Some spring belt drives perform OK, but the drive on 965 clearly needed to be replaced. Fortunately, the Bowser drive with 33 scale inch wheels was a fairly easy installation. The Suydam poles looked nice but tracked very poorly. I replaced the rear running pole with a pole from Rich Eaton, always reliable. After priming, the car received Pollyscale Signal Red and Pollyscale Aged Concrete for the roof, with grimy black underbody, anti-climbers, steps, side frames, couplers, and pilots. Weathering was with a light tan dirt color. The destination signs were in the original Suydam boxes. The size is not perfect for them, but it was the best I could do. The decals are from Micro Scale sets. As always, Bob Dietrich helped me with the spraying after my masking. For this car unlike some others, the painting and masking were fairly simple and straightforward. Decaling was not horrific: one company name on each side and 4 sets of numerals, and no striping. Other than Bob, thanks to Rich Eaton for the poles, to Bowser for the ever-reliable, smooth-running, easy to install drive. The Micro Scale decal sets were essential for the car lettering. The two color books by Allen Copeland were most useful for reference. Pacific Electric has been a popular topic for authors of trolley history for decades and deservedly so, given PE's towering place in the traction industry. Several of those books were vital for this narrative and in detailing the car. PE is a system I neither saw nor rode (though I have ridden the reincarnated LA-Watts-Long Beach line) but it is entitled to a place on my layout inasmuch as PE was such a dominant property in US trolley history. While in a PE frame of mind, it might be time to repower the Hollywood car with a Hollywood Foundry Diablo drive and the PE 1200 car with a North West Short Line Stanton drive. Whatever I do decide to do, fortunately I still have a gallon of household vinegar for soaking the bodies. Or I might retain the spring belt on one or the other of them and repower with new motor and flywheel from North West Short Line which some friends have done with good results-stay tuned!

Here are some photos taken on Richard's layout:



Above: Car 965 has just passed Chicago Rail Sedan 3366 as it approaches Saulena's Tavern, while at right car 965 is passing PSTC Jewett car 43 on the high line!



Car



Above: Car 965 flanked by Lehigh Valley Transit 701 and Baltimore Peter Witt 6109. At right, Car 965 is passing Lehigh Valley Transit car 1030 on the high line.



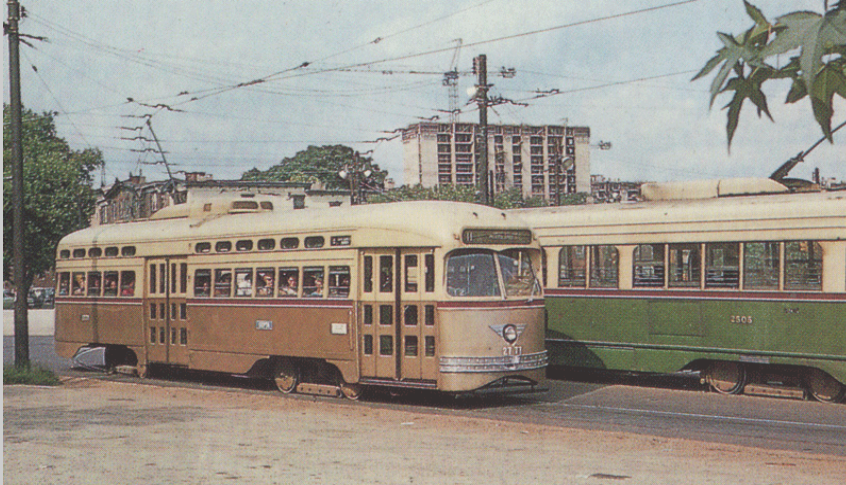
# Super Bowl XLIX Trolley Trip !

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How did some East Coast fans prepare for the February 1, 2015 Super Bowl game between the New England Patriots and the Seattle Seahawks? Well, they chartered a SEPTA PCC II and rode over most of the six lines still (fortunately) served by streetcars in the "City of Brotherly Love". All photos shown were provided by W. Monaghan, a long time SEPTA Elmwood District operator.

The car used was PCC II 2324. Car 2324 as began life in 1946 at the Saint Louis Car Company Plant in Saint Louis, MO. It arrived in Philadelphia for service in March-April 1947 for service on Route 23 as Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) 2777. Route 23, Germantown Avenue, was known as the longest streetcar line in the United States until temporarily bussed by SEPTA in 1992 and vandalized piece by piece by SEPTA since that time. Delivered as a two-man car, hence the assigned number higher than 2501, the car was converted to one/two man operation in 1955.

PCC cars had been assigned to the Surface Car Subway in 1953 but only air-electric PCC cars allowed in the Subway. The reasons for this will not be discussed here. When the all-electric PCC cars were finally allowed in the Surface Car Subway in 1968, Car 2777 eventually found its way to West Philadelphia and was eventually selected for one of SEPTA's early experimental paint jobs. Car 2777 is shown at the 40th Street Portal on August 11, 1969 with 1940-built car 2505 still in PTC livery.



When the Kawasaki cars arrived in 1981-1982, they took over service on the Surface Car Subway routes and Car 2777 along with all the PCC cars left at that time was sent to Callowhill or Luzerne Depot for service on the other trolley routes still operating at the time. It was eventually selected for their General OverHaul (GOH) program which by the time it ended in 1988 extensively rebuilt 112 cars to extend their lives for "not-to-exceed" eight years. SEPTA was to take that NTE very seriously, pulling cars off the street almost to the day when the eight years was reached.

Car 2777 was eventually part of several rehab/rebuild programs and was one of the 112 survivors after the major 1980s rebuilding. When SEPTA was practically forced to return the trolleys to route 15, Girard Avenue, car 2777 was one of the lucky 18 to be chosen to become PCC-II's. It left Luzerne for Brookville in June 2002 and returned to SEPTA for service in March 2004. It joined another lucky 14, including 2715 and 2721 that migrated to San Francisco in 1993 and others like 2733 which was placed in the Market Street 13th Street Station in 1995 and 2711, 2723, 2740 and 2743 that found their way to museums. On a sadder note, of the 100 cars in the 2701-2800 series delivered in 1947, SEPTA lost cars 2705, 2731, 2735, 2752, 2759, 2771, 2794, 2795 and 2800 in the October 1975 Woodland Car House Fire.



1. Car 2324 at the 40th Street Portal, just a few yards west of the location shown in the August 1969 photo.



2. Car 2324 passing Tribute to the Pennsylvania Railroad at 40th & Lancaster. A K-4 4-6-2 steam loco and a GG-1 Electric are shown.





3. Car 2324 sitting in Route 13, Chester Avenue, Short Turn Mount Moriah Loop while 32 year old Kawasaki 9101 passes enroute to Chester and Callahan terminal in Yeadon.



4. On the only stretch of surface private right of way left in Philadelphia, both car 2324 and 9079 head to the 80th and Eastwick Terminal of Route 36, Elmwood Avenue.



5. No fan trip is complete without great photo stops. Here is one Photo stop adjacent to the Philadelphia ZOO at 34th and Girard, westbound on Route 15, Girard Avenue.

# An NMRA President Speaks Out!

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Trolleyville Editorial

In the [February 2015 issue of the NMRA Magazine](#), the current NMRA President, Charlie Getz, spoke about bad behavior in an article titled "A Few Bad Apples..." He mentioned boorish behavior many times, including a Division Super who told a female member "*the NMRA is no place for women*", and an instance where an entire division voted to dissolve because of one disruptive member. In this two page article, [available here with selected portions highlighted](#) for those who have not seen it, he mentioned that these actions happened during the two years he has been President. He went on to state in the article "...I am not looking for a list of bad behavior as much as **your opinion** on how to handle it as an organization. *What should we do? What would you do?...*" Several members of the Trolleyville staff and associates have held senior management positions in various types of companies and while we applaud Mr. Getz for bringing forth these items in a public forum to the NMRA membership. After reading the entire article carefully, the question we have for the President was:

*Just what did you do about any of this?*

We noticed that no mention of any actions taken in response to these incidents was present in the article. Many of us are growing very tired of people in management positions who have the power to correct these infractions and in some cases discipline the persons responsible for their actions but continuously fail to do so. It was as if Charlie was asking everybody else to do what is primarily his job. One of the members of a well known Southern California model railroad club often refers to the NMRA as the "...*KKK without the sheets...*". There is no intention to accuse the NMRA of trying to lynch people, intimidate anyone or fire-bomb a church with little girls inside but the continued protection of the "good old boys" who committed some of these events and the failure to deal with the issues seems to be still very present.

For the last few years, the news has not been very encouraging. We all know that the average hobbyist is getting older. We can see that the hobby is not getting its share of newer and younger members. Model train hobby shops are closing all over the place. (*We do not believe that a shop has been sold in over eighteen months....they just vanish!*) and yet "the" organization that purports to be advancing the hobby, is telling a group that makes up half the potential population that the NMRA is no place for them. And it appears than nothing was done about it and now we have "the" senior executive asking what should WE do about it!

Bringing this closer to home, one of the largest areas of expansion in rail activity in the United States and other countries has been in the area of light rail / heritage trolley lines. There are relatively new Light Rail Lines in Dallas, Houston, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, and Tucson. Dallas even upgraded their cars from three-truck to four truck, adding a large center section. In Los Angeles alone ( the former car capital of America), three new light rail lines have been opened in the last twenty-five years using almost 200 vehicles. A fourth line will open next year and another will be extended and more cars are coming. Instead of allowing insults to women to go apparently unpunished, how about using some influence (assuming that the NMRA still has some), to encourage the development of light rail vehicle (LRV) models! Where is a model of the new Toronto tram? Why has there not been one USA LRV model since the 1979 era Boeing LRV that ran in only two cities? A new generation of transit riders has been being generated and continues to grow and there may be a few new hobbyists in the ridership. But a lot of those daily riders are NOT men. After the NMRA figures out how to deal with some of the issues brought to light by the current President, how about trying to expand this wonderful hobby?

At the end of the article, Charlie stated "Well, those are my thoughts - what are yours?"

Well, these are ours!

# Tell Us About Your Club or Layout!

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We all know about the aging and shrinking of the hobby. In fact the news can get downright depressing at times. But we also know there are several small traction clubs with just a few people and individual traction layouts hidden away in basements, attics and garages. We are inviting any of you to tell us about what you are doing. The scale makes no difference. This is a forum for electric railway modeling from 1895 single truck cars to modern multi-section Light Rail Vehicles. Send articles to [Trolleyville](#). The more manufacturers know about our numbers, the better our chances of getting new products.