

# European Train Enthusiasts



Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter  
MARCH 2006

## Chapter Meeting Saturday, March 11, 1:00-5:00

SWAP MEET at Hope Lutheran Church 1801 Manor Blvd. San Leandro

Hosts: Phil and Mary Woods

Refreshments: Please bring items listed if your LAST name starts with:

P-Z : Desserts A-G : Drinks H-O : Finger foods

### Future Chapter Meetings

Locations will be listed in the next newsletter.

### Upcoming Module SIG Events

**April 8-23:** Hiller Aviation Museum, San Carlos  
**May 14-June 3:** Pleasanton Museum on Main Street  
**June 18-July 2:** Museum of the San Ramon Valley, Danville  
**November 24, 2006-Jan. 7, 2007:** Blackhawk Automobile Museum, Danville.

**Zetmeester :** Robert de Jong  
**Publicatie :** Wolfgang Leitenberger  
**Lokaal meester :** Chris Vais  
**Penningmeester :** Steve Imialek  
**Modules voorzitter :** Tom Melka  
**Promotie :** Rolf Krumbiegel / Peter Barnes

### February Highlights

by Steve Imialek

#### MEETING MINUTES

A regular meeting of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of ETE was held on Feb. 11 at the home of Don and Mary Winslow. Chris Vais called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm with 33 members present. The membership thanked Don and Mary for their generous hospitality in hosting the meeting. Don and his son, David, had their large Lionel layout up and running. They also displayed a newly built portable

Marklin 4'x 8' layout. A special thanks to Mary for the appetizers and letting us use their home.

#### STATUS REPORTS

The treasurer's report showed a balance on hand of \$4,512.30

92 members have paid their 2006 dues.

The Module SIG reported that the SF GWAATS at the Cow Palace was a success. Special recognition was given to Rolf Krumbiegel for developing and printing the flyers that have been used at the past venues. The next venue is tentatively scheduled for late March at Talbot's Toyland in San Mateo. The Hiller Aviation Museum venue is scheduled for April 8-23, contact Peter Barnes (650) 637-1210 or pwbarnes@earthlink.net

#### For the record,

**Chris Vais, as Chairman, and Steve Imialek, as Secretary/Treasurer, were elected by acclamation at the regular Jan. meeting.**

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chris Vais reported on Eurowest. A list of assignments was displayed and volunteers were encouraged to sign up. John Ruehle has offered to do a clinic on painting and weathering. Don Good offered to visit a future meeting of the Sacramento Chapter to enlist support. Please consider sharing your talents as a volunteer or presenting a clinic.

Steve Imialek stated that he, Rolf Krumbiegel, and Wolfgang Leitenberger paid a visit to Mrs. Suzanne Small to receive structures that will be used on the future El Camino Medical Center layout. Steve will catalog the items. He also reported that there is about one year to plan and finish this project. Chris stated that he has the list of volunteers for this project that he received from Jacques Vuye. A "Project



Manager” will be needed in the near future. Please consider volunteering your talents to help construct this worthwhile project.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Some members reported that they were having difficulty obtaining the newsletter by email. A discussion ensued about future issues and meeting notifications by email and regular postal service. Steve Imialek stated that last year it cost about \$1650 to print and mail a monthly newsletter to 133 members. The \$5 in annual membership dues hardly covers this newsletter cost. About 20 members do not have email and should be receiving it by post. Robert De Jong, the newsletter editor, offered some suggestions to receive the newsletter in the future since some members had the newsletter blocked as ‘spam’. Robert will offer some suggestions in the next newsletter and next meeting.

Other New Business was postponed until the next meeting due to the lengthy discussion of Eurowest.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be a SWAP MEET at Hope Lutheran Church 1801 Manor Blvd. San Leandro Hosts: Phil and Mary Woods

**EuroSnips**

*Railway News in Europe and the World*

*Compiled by Jim Recker*

EuroSnips - March 2006

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**Gatwick Express May Be Axed**

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LONDON -- Feb 3 - The non-stop express rail link between London Victoria and Gatwick Airport is to be axed, according to British government officials. The move is designed to reduce overcrowding on services on the route, the main London to Brighton line.

The British Department for Transport said "fast and frequent" services would remain but would serve additional stations. Figures show that during rush hour morning hours the service is, on average, just over half full. Eliminating

the express service would provide an extra 480 seats for commuters.

Meanwhile a Gatwick Express spokesman said the future of the service had not been "100% confirmed".

In a statement, transport minister Derek Twigg said there would still be "a high-quality service" for airline travelers. The minister said the move had taken into account concerns raised by UK airports operator BAA and airline companies.

The change is part of a number of improvements in 2006 to the Brighton main line and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, in anticipation of the Rail Link extension around London in 2007.

**Dutch Tests on HSL Zuid Sets New Records**

**ROTTERDAM** -- Feb 21 - High-speed tests on the new HSL Zuid line have begun between the Belgian border and Rotterdam with a converted Thalys that has reach speeds of up to 330 km/h (205 mph), shattering all rail speed records in the Netherlands. Testing of the new ETCS on-board signaling has started as well.

Testing of the new HSL will continue for the next four weeks with Thalys sets and locomotives; two weeks in the Netherlands and then two weeks in Belgium. In initial locomotive tests, a Siemens Taurus reached 258 km/h (160 mph), setting a new Dutch speed record. The locomotive hauled a pair of DB "Systemtechnik" inspection cars in a series of tests to check track and overhead catenary equipment. A slightly higher unofficial record was achieved on February 2 when the locomotive was running without the test cars.

Observations from the cab suggested that there was a discrepancy of 1 or 2 km/h between the speed shown on the ERTMS driver-machine interface and the locomotive's speedometer, which measures speed by counting axle revolutions rather than the odometer and radar used by the ERTMS equipment. That should not affect the use of ETCS signaling on this new high-speed line.





**Rail4chem Now Rolls Into France**

PARIS -- Feb 13 - Just one month after expansion into Belgium, the German rail operator "rail4chem" has announced having received authority and a safety certificate for freight carrier operations on the French Rail network, and becomes the first foreign operator on French rails.

According to rail4chem, obtaining the certificate was a difficult process. Initial filing of an application began in November 2004. However, despite Réseau Ferré de France, SNCF, and French transport ministry support, the process was legally very complicated.

Now with operating authority in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and operating alliances in Spain and Italy, rail4chem becomes the dominant carrier for chemical freight transportation across Europe. While rail4chem owns its locomotives and trained engine drivers, SNCF Fret engineers will be trained to run rail4chem in France.

**New High-Speed Link between Russian and Finland**

HELSINKI -- Feb 16 - The Finnish and Russian railways have announced a joint venture to open a high-speed train link between the two countries by 2008. Initially Pendolinos, already in use in Finland, would be used, cutting the current St. Petersburg - Helsinki trip time of five and a half hours by at least two hours.

**CER and Balkan Railways Sign Accord**

BELGRADE, Serbia -- Jan 13 - The Serbian Railways organized a meeting between the Community of European Railways (CER), and the railway companies in the Balkan countries, namely the railway companies from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Republic of Srpska and Serbia. At the meeting, the convened railway companies signed a common declaration, outlining a course of development and cooperation between the railways in South Eastern Europe. At the meeting, problems existing within the restructuring process in the region and the issue of financing during the process of transition were also discussed.

This meeting served as a prelude to discussions with European Union. The Directors of Balkan Railways agreed that, for revitalization of the railways in this region and their faster and high quality entering to the European traffic system, there has to be more intensive and quality cooperation, as well as the cooperation within the Community of European Railways and other international railway institutions.

**Border Crossing Reopened**

VIENNA -- Feb 15 - The rail border crossing between Fratres (Austria) and Slavonice (Czech Republic) has been reopened. For the Czech state railway (CD) and the three neighboring regions, this crossing will enable economic growth of the logging industries and international tourism

The border crossing has been closed since World War II, curtailing economic development in the Austrian region of Schwarzenau. For Lower Austria, This rail line reopening promise to jump start economic activities in Lower Austria as well.

**ASIA: Cross-Border Rail Service Restored-After 40 Years**

Feb 18 - Pakistan and India have restored a train service four decades after it was withdrawn during the second of three wars between the two countries since the 1947 partition of the Indian sub-continent. The Thar Express, named after the desert crossed by the service, follows resumption of the Lahore-New Delhi service in 2004 as part of confidence building during the peace process.

In the latest demonstration of the peace dialogue, the Thar Express arrived at the border town of Khokrapar in the Pakistani province of Sindh to make the historic 2km cross-border trip to Munabao in the Indian state of Rajasthan. Elaborate celebrations and festivities were held in both border towns. The first train crossing carried over 200 passengers.

**2006 DUES ARE now past DUE - \$20 \$5 for SF Bay Area Chapter and \$15 for ETE Nat'l Name Address City, State, Zip Phone, Email, Fax**

**Make check payable to "E T E". Mail payment with this dues form to:  
ETE SF Bay Area  
P.O. Box 1451  
Brentwood, CA 94513**

**You will not receive anymore newsletters if dues are not received by March 20th, 2006**



**A note from Peter Barnes**

Helpers are needed for Module SIG display at Hiller Aviation Museum April 8 through 23.

-- **Staffing** - Qualified layout operators and train enthusiasts are needed to help display our hobby to the public during the two week run in April. The Museum is open every day from 10-5 except closed on Easter (April 16). I have many time slots filled, but many more available for train (and plane) "enthusiasts". E-mail (pwbarnes@earthlink.net) or call (650-637-1210) if

you are interested and available. If you are interested, but aren't sure You're available; Let me know now and, again, when your schedule is known. I am fairly sure we can accommodate late requests, as we hope all interested ETE members can enjoy this venue.

-- **Promotion** - In our quest to make the ETE display at Hiller a well attended event, I have 8.5x11 flyers (color for posting and B&W, as well as 4x5 handouts (refrigerator size?) for use at hobby shops, work, train clubs or other venues that might garner visitors to Hiller in April. I will gladly mail a quantity to you for distribution (tell me how many of what kind)- pwbarnes@earthlink.net or - 650-637-1210. I will also have copies at our March meeting.

April Meeting Program at Hiller [Chris and Steve The lok pull will consume about 2 hrs and I was thinking of starting early, perhaps with a break for the business meeting. I would like to conclude the lok-pull fairly early and announce winners, as folks seem to start drifting off about 3-3:30.

Also, the Lok-pull can be scheduled at another venue, and the Docent tour omitted if you have other ideas for the April meeting [e.g. a presentation on modules (tour by owners?) by the SIG which could be fun and interesting in the well lit atrium.]

Lok Pull - AC (digital and analog) and DC powered track (K-track) with variable slope and weighted cars will be used, as in past events, to asses a winner of the Chapter's perpetual "Strained-Train. Burst-Boiler Trophy".

As in 2004, we will calculate a pulling "efficiency" number for each lok entered to determine a winner. Each participant will be allowed a lok-only warm-up run and two pulls. More than one lok may be entered in the contest, but second, third... loks will be tested after all participants have had a chance to test their first lok.

The pulling "efficiency" will be calculated as follows: "Efficiency" equals the train wt in grams, times the distance pulled, in meters, on a pre-set slope/grade; divided by the locomotive weight in grams, times the number of drive motors in the lok (usually one or two). David Winslow won the contest in 2004 with a DB 44 steamer which developed an "efficiency" of 17.59 on the 2004 track.

Get out and tune your best pulling lok (especially if it is light weight) and come prepared to have fun and win the Trophy.

By Peter Barnes

*Editors note: I know it might be a bit confusing, but I applaud Peter for taking the club meetings to another level, Let's all see what we can do to make the meetings more fun and more than just us "old farts" sitting in a room and talk about trains only...let's play more!*

