

# European Train Enthusiasts



*Newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter  
October 2006*

## **Chapter Meeting Saturday, October 14 at:**

Don, Mary and David Winslow  
Generation Church  
2811 San Carlos Ave.  
San Carlos, CA 94070

**Refreshments: Please bring items listed if your LAST name starts with:**  
A - G : Desserts H - O: Drinks P - Z : Finger foods

### **Future Chapter Meetings**

Locations will be listed in the next newsletter.

### **Upcoming Module SIG Events**

**November 24, 2006–Jan. 7, 2007:** Blackhawk  
Automobile Museum, Danville.

**Redactie :** Robert de Jong  
**Publicatie :** Wolfgang Leitenberger  
**Voorzitter :** Chris Vais  
**Penningmeester :** Steve Imailek  
**Modules voorzitter :** Tom Melka  
**Promotie :** Rolf Krumbiegel / Peter Barnes

### **September Meeting Highlights**

September 9, 2006 Meeting Highlights

A regular chapter meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm by Chairman, Chris Vais. Annie and Andreas Hildebrandt were warmly thanked by the 40+ members present for hosting an Oktoberfest for us and allowing us to enjoy the progress Andreas has made on his HO layout. The variety of sausages came from Dittmar's German Deli on San Antonio Ave, the desserts from Esther's German Bakery also on San Antonio, and the beer, Spaten of course, graciously provided by Chrissa Imports. Andreas mention that he was off to Germany again and there is a Chrisis' throughout the country. It seems that so much beer was consumed during World Cup that there won't be

enough beer to go around for Oktoberfest. But that wasn't a problem during the meeting as we gratefully drained our glasses, thankful that we were here instead of there. :~)))

There were familiar faces present as well as new faces. We'd like to welcome new member, Bruce Anton.

Treasurer/Secretary Steve Imialek stated that there was \$3779.73 as the balance on hand. It was duly noted that Jens Ullmann gave a donation of \$50 to the chapter. Thank you, Jens!

The Module SIG is running trains at the Tracy Historical Museum in Tracy until Sept. 24. This former WPA Post Office is now the museum in downtown Tracy. The venue coincided with the opening day of Tracy's "Dry Bean Festival". Over 200 people visited the museum on our opening weekend. Our next venue is our annual visit to Talbot's Toyland in San Mateo Sept. 30 and Oct. 1. After that, the modules get freshened up for our last venue of the year and first venue of the new year at Blackhawk Automotive Museum. New modules are being made ready (we hope) for this seven-week venue. Anyone interested in becoming a module owner, operator, or docent should contact Tom Melka [melka@pacbell.net](mailto:melka@pacbell.net) or any one of the module owners.

Eurowest X was a smashing success. Over 800+ visitors came to our annual weekend convention. Vendors reported doing a very good business. Modules were operated by San Diego, Sacramento, the Bemo (Boys) Narrow Gauge Group, and the SF Bay Area



Chapter. A few new members were signed up. The banquet, organized by Annie and Andreas Hildebrandt, was an overwhelming delight. Four entrees of typical German fare were served buffet style to 80+ diners. Conversation and good times flowed freely. Andreas was honored by the chapter for his outstanding contributions to the chapter and ETE. Peter Barnes was also honored for his contributions in securing and organizing EW X at the Hiller Aviation Museum this year. And Peter honored our spouses and significant others who "lovingly put up with us and our hobby" with a toast. There were numerous others who contributed their time and effort to make this convention a success. Thanks to all who gave their time for this worthwhile venue.

Next year's Eurowest was also on the agenda. The idea of a standing committee with its own chairperson and members was discussed. It's possible that Hiller would also be next year's site. Chris Vais would like to see volunteers step forward now to form this committee. Please contact Chris (510) 521-04347 or [Christopher.Vais@URSCorp.com](mailto:Christopher.Vais@URSCorp.com) if you would like to help in any way. Steve Imialek volunteered to be the EW XI 'bagman' (treasurer) again.

Next meeting: Generation Church in San Carlos hosted by Don Winslow on Oct. 14.

**IMPORTANT: CHAPTER DUES WILL BE \$10 BEGINNING 2007. The membership voted for a \$5 increase in dues. SO THE ANNUAL DUES FOR OUR ETE MEMBERSHIP WILL BE \$25 (\$10 TO THE CHAPTER AND \$15 TO ETE NATIONAL). DUES ARE DUE JANUARY 1 AND DELINQUENT MARCH 31**

**Future Meetings:**

Oct. 14: Host Don, Mary and David Winslow  
Generation Church  
2811 San Carlos Ave.  
San Carlos, CA 94070

Nov. 11-12: (no meeting)  
30<sup>th</sup> Annual International Railfair Sat. 10-5 &  
Sun. 10-4

Placer Co. Fairgrounds, Roseville  
([www.internationalrailfair.com](http://www.internationalrailfair.com))

Dec. 9: Host Rolf Krumbiegel  
Blackhawk Museum

2007 DUES ARE coming up \$25 Due Dec.31, 2006  
\$10 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  
PO Box 21544  
Concord, CA94521

**EUROSNIPS --- By: Jim Recker.**

**MAGLEV CRASH KILLS 23**

LATHEN, Germany - Sept. 22 -- A high-speed magnetic levitation train smashed into a maintenance car on an elevated test track the station at Lathen in lower Saxony near the Dutch border, killing 25 people and injuring 10.

This is the second Maglev incident in the last two month, following a fire on a Maglev train in Shanghai on August 11. It was Germany's worst rail disaster since 1998, when 101 people died as an ICE train derailed and smashed into a bridge near the northern town of Eschede in the country's deadliest train crash.

Initial indications point to human error, not the sophisticated maglev technology, to blame for putting the maintenance vehicle on the track at the same time as the Siemen "Transrapid" train. The train was moving at 125 mph but can reach speeds of up to 270 mph. The speeding train's low nose scooped up the maintenance car, hurling it against the front and along the roof. Rescuers had to climb fire ladders and use cranes to reach the 13-foot-high track to clear debris and retrieve the dead and injured. At least one American was killed. Seats and other wreckage were left strewn beneath the track.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel flew to the site, saying her thoughts were with the victims and their relatives.

Merkel declined to talk about what affect the accident would have on Germany's maglev technology industry, which she worked to promote during a trip to China in May. While there, she rode the maglev train that links Shanghai's Pudong International Airport with the city's financial district.

The closed 20-mile track, built in 1985 near the northwestern towns of Doerpen and Kathen, consists of two loops connected by a long straightaway. It is operated by Munich-based IABG mostly as an exhibition aimed at showing off Germany's maglev technology. Aboard the train that crashed were Transrapid employees, workers from a nursing care company and several other local visitors.

American martial arts expert Ernest Lieb, 66, of Muskegon, Mich., was among the dead. The maintenance car, which had two workers aboard, was used to check the tracks and clear them of branches and other debris. Standard

operating procedures call for the track's control center to get an "all-clear", that the maintenance vehicle is out of the way, before starting the train.

Magnetic levitation works by suspending, propelling and guiding vehicles with electromagnetic force. A magnetized coil runs along the track, known as a guideway, which repels magnets on the undercarriage of the train, allowing it to levitate several centimeters high. When a current is passed through, the electromagnetic forces pull and push a train along the guideway.

The Transrapid floats about half an inch on a cushion of magnetism.

The train runs four days a week on the 20-mile test track between Doerpen and Lathen near the Dutch border. The maintenance car was regularly used to check and clear the elevated tracks of branches and other debris.

Investigators plan to examine the test track's security system, which was not the most up-to-date for magnetic levitation or "maglev" trains, but was nevertheless granted authority from state officials to operate.

Despite the accident, officials in the southern state of Bavaria said they would move ahead with plans there to construct a maglev line between the state capital, Munich, and its nearby airport.

In China, where Shanghai runs a German-made maglev train, officials also noted the security system there would prevent such an accident as happened in Lathen and insisted the city still plan to extend its line.

Meanwhile in Japan, Nagoya-based JR Central, undeterred by the German accident, announced on September 25 that it has plans to spend US\$3.1 billion to develop maglev trains over next decade, expanding a test track west of Tokyo. This company generates about 70 percent of its sales from high-speed trains and aims to start commercial maglev services. A JR spokesman said that there was no concern about the maglev technology. Central Japan Railway recently completed a maglev test run with about 100 passengers. JR Central is planning a special event in late November, inviting 1,800 people to ride the train at its test center.



#### GERMANY TAKES OVER WORLD SPEED RECORD

ALLERSBERG, Germany - Sept. 05 -- A new world record speed for locomotives was set in Germany by a four-axle Taurus locomotive (#1216 050), built by Siemens for Austrian Federal Railways, hauling a single dynamometer car along a section of the Nürnberg - Ingolstadt Neubaustrecke (high speed line), hitting a maximum speed of 357 km/h.

The previous speed record for a locomotive was established over 50 years ago on March 29 1955 in France, when SNCF's BB9004 attained 331 km/h between Lamothe and Morcenx on the Bordeaux - Dax main line in southwest France.

The Taurus loco, decked out in a silver livery, set the new record between Allersberg and Kinding, where numerous photographers and onlookers had gathered to watch the event. Considerable interest was generated by the presence at Kinding station of the French BB9004 and its fellow 1955 record holder CC7107, which had been hauled specially for the occasion from their home at the SNCF railway museum in Mulhouse.

Whereas SNCF made a number of modifications to the locomotives, track and power supply for the 1955 speed trials, no changes were made to the Taurus loco. The four-system loco operated under DB AG's standard high-speed catenary.



Although the speed record was established on infrastructure owned by DB AG, Germany's national railway was not the operator, as Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) owns the engine. However, the Nürnberg-based IGE company (Internationale Gesellschaft für Eisenbahnverkehr) was designated as operator for the record, which thus shares the record-holder title with DB, ÖBB and Siemens.

The fastest speed recorded by a passenger-carrying train is 515.3 km/h, established by TGV Set 325 on May 18 1990 on the TGV Atlantique line in France.

#### SWISS PRESTIGE TRANSITION

LAUSANNE, Switzerland - Sept. 04 -- The owner of the "Lemaco Prestige Models S.A.", Urs Egger, announced that after 20 very successful years in the field of brass models, the business in the name of Lemaco would close down at the end of September. Lemaco Prestige Models have been taken over by Lematec Prestige Models S.A. of Saint-Maurice.

The very last models to be available in the Lemaco name will be an HO SNCF CC 14000, and an O-gauge SNCF 140 C.

From now, all previously announced models, models currently in production, models on existing reservations, the Tenshodo motorized truck range, and the repair service will all be handled by the new Company. Lemaco's model railway department will be closed from October 1st, 2006 through January 1st 2007. After that date a new, illustrated stock list will be available on [www.lemaco.ch](http://www.lemaco.ch).

The reason for the name change is that Lemaco SA is one of the biggest toy and hobby trade importers in Switzerland. The son of the current owner will be continuing this business, but without involvement in model railways. In his press release, Egger personally thanked "all those whose assistance and cooperation I was privileged to enjoy over the past 50 years of model railway activity (30 years Fulgurex, 20 years Lemaco)."

Here is the new Company's contact information:  
Lematec Prestige Models SA  
Case postale 97  
CH-1890 Saint-Maurice  
Tel. +41 (0)24 463 02 50  
Fax +41 (0)24 463 02 51  
[www.lematec.ch](http://www.lematec.ch) / [info@lematec.ch](mailto:info@lematec.ch)

Swiss industry analysts remain concerned about the fate of the remaining "high-end" precision model maker, Fulgurex. Its founder and mentor, Count Antonio Giansanti-Coluzzi, passed away at the beginning of this year shortly after selling the brand name to his Asian sub-contractors.

#### LGB LOOKS FOR BANKRUPTCY PROTECTION

NURNBERG, Germany - Sept. 28 -- Ernst Paul Lehmann Patentwerk OHG (EPL) in Nürnberg, the maker of LGB trains, has requested bankruptcy protection. The Nürnberg district court then ordered temporary bankruptcy administration, and the law firm Goede, Bergfeld, Waldherr & Hussmann was appointed as the temporary bankruptcy trustee and is now managing EPL together with the current owners, the Richter family. It is hoped that a way can be found to preserve and secure the company. At a factory meeting, the company's co-workers were updated on all relevant information and were told that wages and salaries are secured for the next three months, no matter what the resolution of the bankruptcy claims. The staff expressed its support of the ongoing efforts to continue the company. Steps have already been taken with all major creditors so that production and distribution of LGB products to retailers can begin again immediately. The temporary bankruptcy trustee and the management are eager to insure the future of this traditional enterprise, Ernst Paul Lehmann Patentwerk OHG, on a permanent basis.

In taking these steps, EPL has prevented a hostile takeover of the family firm. According to EPL, Lehmann has been operating profitably, despite the severe problems in the model train industry. However there has been a fear that the largest of the financing banks would sell its loans to Lehmann to a third party without notice.

EPL also emphasized that these moves will enable it to ship product and provide services during the crucial holiday sales season.

#### COPPER THIEVES ATTACK RAIL LINES

COUTRAS, France - Sept. 9 -- Attracted by the high resale price of metals, thieves in France have been attacking anything out in the open that has copper, including telephone lines, electrical supply lines and rail side materials.

In a daring raid at 3am in the morning, the thieves this time went after more than 2,000 meters of copper wiring used for primary signaling along the Bordeaux-Paris TGV line, between Coutras and Angoulême. It was not also daring, but dangerous as any wrong move could have electrocuted the thieves.

Rail traffic the following morning was severely curtailed.

Two TGV Bordeaux-Paris express trains were blocked at dead signals. Local and regional were replaced by bus service. By mid-morning, one track was re-opened; the second one later in the day. The local SNCF officials explained those repairs were delayed by damage to the rail lines adjacent to the area where the cable was pulled away.

Two days later, several villages in the same French region lost electrical power when power lines disappeared in the

middle of the night. French authorities are increasing police presence in hopes of deterring future incidents.

**RED REALLY MEANS STOP**

BRUSSELS - Sept. 4 -- Belgian (SNCB-NMBS) rail officials are working hard to make sure train engineers don't run red signals. A recent government report highlighted an increase in red signal "running" since 2004 when 64 trains did not stop when they were supposed to.

According to the SNCB-NMBS, most of the infractions were caused by lack of attention. More encouraging is that the SNCB-NMBS is expecting to report a 10% decline in 2006 of these type incidents.

Nevertheless, the Belgian paper "Le Soir" reported on an incident last June 13th where a passenger train from Namur ran a red light at the Huy train station. Fortunately the local "chef de gare" took notice, flipped some switches and signals, and got the train to stop less than a kilometer away

from a train coming in the other direction.

The SNCB-NMBS has increased communications and reminders to all train drivers. Belgian railroad unions nevertheless complain that productivity increases demanded by SNCB-NMBS management are the root cause of the problem.

