

The Central Suffolk Dispatch

A News Service for the Central Suffolk Operations Group

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The Central Suffolk Operations Group (CSOG) met at the Stone Canyon Rail Road (SCRR) on Thursday, July 28, 2016. Tonight there was another grand group in attendance for this session. The gathering included operators John, Howard, Mike, Ron, Jeff, Ward, Carl, JJ, Jack, Dave and Byron. According to our records this is the largest group of operators to have attended a Central Suffolk Operations Group session. The amazing thing about it is that the Stone Canyon Rail Road handled the load quite nicely. There were few delays and only a couple of instances where there was a congestion of operators, primarily in front of the Stone City freight yard, at least as far as we observed. Operation assignments were as follows. John ran the rail road as Dispatcher. Ward and Jeff took care of the Stone City yard duties. Howard, Mike, Ron, Carl, JJ, Jack, Dave and Byron were the train operators.

Ron and Dave started out the session operating local freight LF5 out of staging. The following photograph shows them in close co-operation. Dave is operating the throttle, throwing turnouts, calling Dispatch for track clearance, and Ron is up ahead doing other railroad things. Jeff,



Dave and Ron operating LF5 as a team

Howard, and the Superintendent somehow snuck into the frame.

LF5 was soon followed by Howard operating the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe passenger train P10. Sorry, Howard. You didn't screw up anything so there won't be much about you tonight.

Conductor JJ and engineer Byron operated the C10 eastbound coal train next out of staging. JJ discovered a new procedure for exchanging the empty hoppers for the loaded hoppers at the Rockwell Mine which will become the standard for that procedure, unless they forget it before next month. Later, conductor Byron and engineer JJ operated LF10, the eastbound local freight. Contrary to the Superintendent's suggestion, there were no set outs at the coal mine and there hasn't been for many previous sessions! But there was a pickup they almost missed.

Mike operated P5, the Union Pacific passenger train the "City of Los Angeles" with power units 997A and 997B on the point. At times, it had to be pointed out to Mike that his train was going backwards.

Mike also operated Extra P20, the Southern Pacific Stone Canyon Daylight, with SP X6003 on the point. No cars left in the tunnel tonight. Boo! No, no, we mean Yeah!!! However, there was some trickery planned just in case Mike was able to get his entire train through the tunnel. But that plan was dashed upon the rocks of despair when Ward didn't co-operate and allowed the coal train to proceed into the tunnel AHEAD of the Daylight. Now we mean the "Boo!"

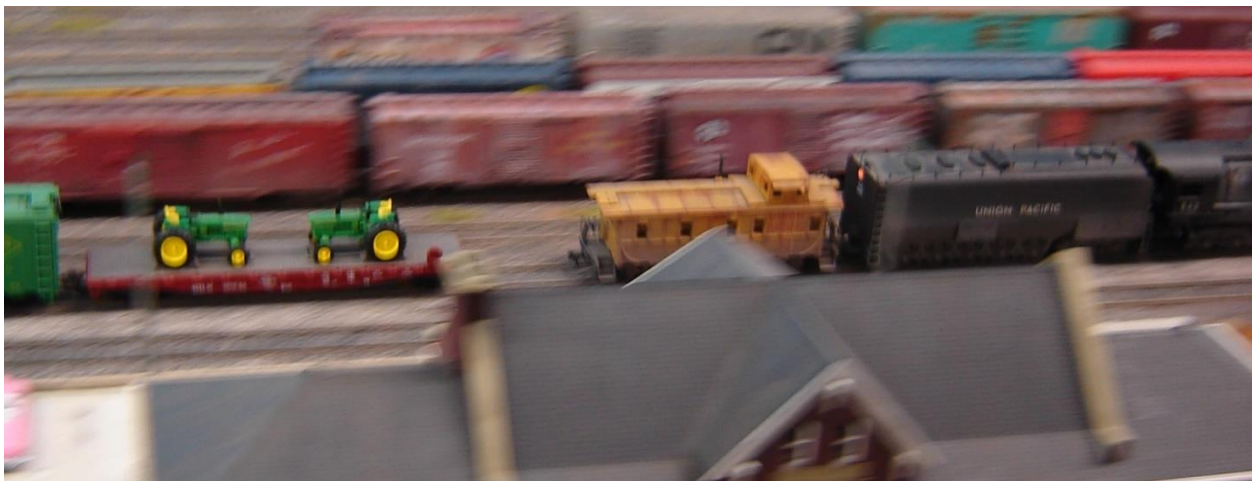
Jack and Carl were observed admiring the splendid job JJ and Byron did up at the Rockwell Mine. We didn't get what train they were operating. Maybe they were just hanging around admiring the splendid job JJ and Byron did up at the Rockwell Mine!



Carl pointing out the particulars of the hopper transfer at the mine to Jack

The clip board for TF10/TF20, the long reefer train, was left on the track number one nail in staging and had to be relocated to its proper position on the track number 2 nail! The Superintendent asked us to remind operators to pay more attention to details when staging their trains!

Are we ever going to see the helper train make it all the way through unscathed? Well, let us describe tonight's fiasco starting at a point long before any power was applied to an involved locomotive. There was a rumor that the roundhouse turn-table was busted. One might ask what that has to do with the operation of the helper train. We like to call it the helper train but it really is (going out on a limb here, we could be wrong) TF5, the Westbound Through Freight. Anyway, the helper locomotive couldn't be turned and therefore had to push backwards (not in line with our way of thinking but possibly at times prototypical). One feeble attempt we overheard to justify this situation was that since the engineer's cab would be actually ahead of the business part of the locomotive, then it could be considered a "cab-forward" locomotive traveling in the proper direction! Did you ever ...? Then engineer Dave, quick on his feet, spotted another problem; the helper was not equipped with a front coupler! This begs the question, "How did a fancy-pants passenger locomotive, with its passenger train gearing, get roped into pusher freight duty?" Without a front coupler, the helper traveling backwards couldn't pull the caboos, but we guess you already caught on to that one. The "Wardmaster" sized up the situation and rapidly five-fingered the caboos and moved it from the yard goat to the tender of the helper locomotive. This meant that the massive locomotive was going to revert back to the old way and push on a caboose. Oh, my! Somehow Mike, the engineer on the lead turbine engine, took that as a "highball" and started to accelerate his train out of the yard. The caboos and helper locomotive were observed racing through the yard to catch up and couple on the fly. The passengers waiting



The helper locomotive flying past the Stone City station trying to catch the front end of the train

at the Stone City station were all excited. They thought they were watching the filming of an action packed adventure movie. During the run there were a number of breakaways and the disconnecting of the helper at Red River Canyon was boring since all that had to be done was to uncouple and head back to the yard, with no caboose movements involved.

Don't let the following photograph of the lead turbine in this tranquil setting lull you to sleep. Mike has the pedal to the metal as it crested the grade.



Don't let this tranquil photograph fool you

This second photograph gives one a better perspective of what is really going on. The train was moving so fast at Red River Canyon that our Staff photographer couldn't keep it in focus.



We call this one the "Turbine-Blow-By"

In fear of losing our collective lives here at the CSD, let us say this about scale model helper trains. After reading a number of articles on this topic, the one thing that stands out is that there has to be a need for helper service. That turbine can pull the entire train unaided, maybe including the helper locomotive, over the hill. What one might suggest is removing the turbine to some other train and replacing it with one having lesser capability that alone, could not pull the train over the hump. This way, at least on the upgrade, the couplers should stay engaged. A lot of synchronization will still be needed on the downgrade with the lead locomotive doing less work than the helper to keep out the slack, which appears to be reason the couplers are breaking open now.

Just in case it wasn't observed by all, we paid off Ward at the usual rate of one pack of gum for his outstanding report on the recent proceedings at the Jerome Central Rail Road. In addition, he is now officially an Apprentice Reporter on staff, a step up from freelance Cub Reporter, to handle events where his expertise will be required. This is an exceptional business opportunity for the Central Suffolk Dispatch, we gain one qualified reporter and we don't have to pay him off anymore!

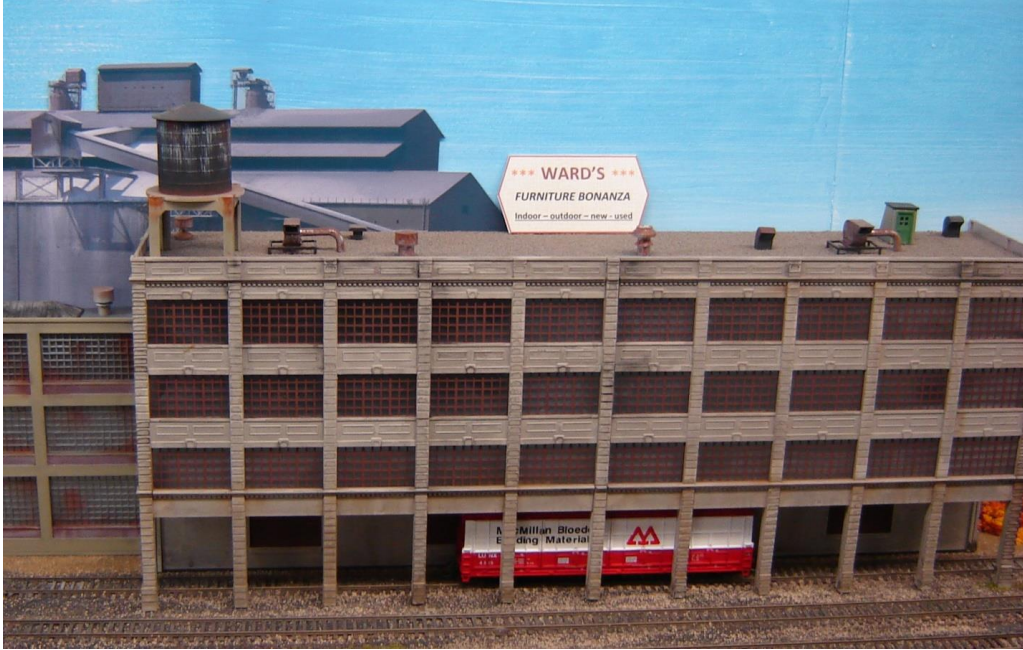
While we are on the subject of Ward, let us give credit where credit is due. Maybe you all knew this already, but our observation is that he really, we mean really, knows the job of Stone Canyon Yardmaster. He knows the schedule of trains, what has to be done to each, and along with his buddy the "Jeffster", gets the job done.



Our man Ward, on the job

It was also learned, through emails intercepted and released by the Russians via *Diaper Leaks*, that some sort of back door negotiations are underway concerning a large shipment of furniture from Ward's Furniture Bonanza to a small town in Arizona. Something really stinks in Clarkdale.

(continued on next page)



Photograph courtesy of the Southwest Regional Office, Terrorist Surveillance Squad