

RAILBRICKS™

BRICK RAILROADING MAGAZINE



INSIDE:
Brickworld 2011
Fana'Briques 2011
National Train Show



*Building
Superliner® Cars
with Benn Coifman*

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A detailed LEGO City diorama featuring two tall, dark grey skyscrapers with blue-tinted spires. A blue bridge connects the two buildings. The base of the scene is filled with various LEGO elements, including a white and red train, a yellow car, a green van, and numerous minifigures. The background shows other LEGO buildings and a blue wall.

National Train Show

LEGO Trains take
over the NMRA!

By Russell Clark

Upholding the yearly tradition, LEGO® Trains made another very successful showing at the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) National Train Show (NTS). The NTS is the largest model train show in the country, and moves to a different city every year. It is held in conjunction with the NMRA National Convention, and is held the final weekend of the convention. The 2011 NTS took place July 8-10 in Sacramento, CA at the Sacramento Convention Center. Approximately 36 AFOLs, representing four clubs, made the trip. The LEGO display took up a total area of 55' x 40' and took 18 hours to set up.

The anchor layout was provided by the San Francisco Bay Area LEGO Train Club (BayLTC). This layout was approximately 20' x 30' and featured urban, suburban, industrial, recreational, farming, and yard scenes. One of the highlights of the layout was the 30' long downtown area featuring twin 30' long monorail lines running up and down Main Street. Connecting this layout to another part of the display was a 10' model of the San Francisco Bay Bridge with a microscale model of the Japanese Battleship Yamato sailing out from underneath.

One member of the Southern California LEGO Train Club (SCLTC) participated in the show, providing a downtown block on the BayLTC layout as well as some miscellaneous structures and rolling stock. At the other end of the bridge was a 10' x 12' overflow layout with extra running trains and yard space. Providing a safe return for the LEGO trains was the Puget Sound LEGO Train Club (PSLTC). One of their members provided a 5' x 6' layout featuring a Main Street area and orange-groves.

Providing their own independent layout was the local club, the Sacramento Area Brick Builders (SacBB). This unique layout ran 4.5v, 12v, and remote control trains exclusively, and featured many Classic Town scenes from the old 6000 LEGO Idea Book. It was a kick to see both the Maersk Train and Metroliner running on 12v! Also part of this approximately 8' x 10' layout were urban, suburban, downtown, and recreational scenes, a fountain with real running water, a Castle village scene, and a really nice Transcontinental Railroad "Golden Spike" diorama.

Wednesday and Thursday were setup days. Though there were a couple of hours Friday morning for setup, the media were expecting fully setup & running trains by Thursday night. Boy, did the AFOLs take it to the wire! They had to be out at 8:30 Thursday night, and must have finished at 8:29. As an unofficial tradition, several AFOLs went to Buca di Beppo for dinner on Wednesday night.

Friday morning was the official media day. There were several TV stations on hand with numerous on-air appearances by the LEGO trains including a live interview with BayLTC's Russell Clark, the LEGO Display Coordinator, for 'Good Day Sacramento'. The crowds were steady throughout the day. Once people learned there was a local LEGO club in Sacramento, SacBB fielded many questions and handed out a lot of contact information.

Crowds surrounded the layouts all day Saturday. It was another full day of interacting and answering questions. Saturday night was also the AFOL pizza party. Everyone met at a local pizza parlor for dinner and enjoyed an all-you-can-eat pizza and salad buffet. Goodies



provided by LEGO were randomly distributed to very happy show attendees, and some were distributed to each participating club. Also available to attendees, for a nominal fee, was the traditional engraved souvenir 1x8 event brick.

The crowds continued to pour in on Sunday, the final day of the show. By the end of the day there were many happy, but exhausted, LEGO fans ready to go home and rest their feet. What took 18 hours to set up was quickly packed up within 3 hours. The public attendance for the three days was somewhere in the neighborhood of 22,000. The NMRA were very pleased and were already asking if there was a local LEGO club in their next city.

On the model railroading side of things, Tiffeny Nervig of SCLTC and Russell Clark of BayLTC both received the NMRA Golden Spike Award. This is usually the first and easiest step in pursuing the NMRA Achievement Program. All LEGO train fans should check out this program and try out for this award. Several other AFOLs have already been awarded the Golden Spike.

Next year the NMRA NTS travels to Grand Rapids, MI. Following that it will be in Atlanta, GA in 2013, Cleveland, OH in 2014, and Portland, OR in 2015. Are you ready? 



