

Steve King presented 2010 Bill Jewett Award

BY PHIL MONAT

It gives me great pleasure to announce the presenting of the third annual Bill Jewett Award to Steve King. As I was getting more into the operations aspect of the hobby, I heard Steve's name mentioned several times and I saw his many articles and classes on TT&TO (time table and train order), where he is a renowned expert and authority. In addition, his work on behalf of the NMRA (Division and Region President, over 50 clinics presented, author of several books and articles, and chairing several regional conventions as well as the 1976 National) really caught my attention and respect.

But while these items are impressive and certainly noteworthy, your Board voted for Steve for one over-riding reason: His continued and passionate commitment to teaching prototype operations, regardless of style of control, size of layout, or skill level of the modelers, to anybody who will listen. He has long been the go-to person for things related to TT&TO operations, but that is not the full measure of this talented modeler. He has helped teach prototype operations to hundreds of modelers and set up more than a few layouts for their owners who were struggling with the concept of

prototype operations. If the OPSIG ever had a Moses, Steve King would be it.

Steve, like many of us, got his first Lionel set at age 3, which means he has been an active modeler for over 64 years! He enjoyed operations from the beginning; his first layout (named the Wiz Bang Railroad) morphed into the statelier sounding Atlanta, Chattanooga & Northern Railway. Traffic in the form of hand-written paper waybills was moved across the railroad by running laps around the layout! So many laps, in fact, that the Lionel tubular rail actually had to be replaced because of wear. An Erector set motor moving a loop of string over a CTC-like diagram of the AC&N served to simulate, with markers stuck to the string, the other trains on the railroad. All of this and he was only in his early teens!

High school brought the transition to HO scale and then shortly thereafter to N scale. Growing up in the Dayton, Ohio area meant Steve was in the middle of the "Lichen Belt" of beautiful railroads set in the green Appalachian Mountains. Allen McClelland's Virginian & Ohio, Jim Paine's Durham & Southern, and Don Santel's Ohio, Michigan & South Shore were all nearby. In pre-OPSIG days, the NMRA and Division 3 became his conduit to model railroads and the chance to



STEVE KING

grow up operating with some of the best. Steve credits the opportunity to know and work with Allen and regular sessions on his V&O, with solidifying his interest in prototype style operation.

For those of you who wonder where Steve got his prototype knowledge and experience, he worked as an Operator and Dispatcher for the Baltimore & Ohio and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy in the early 1960s, spending time on B&O Toledo Division before moving to Chicago under the Burlington flag. The Air Force introduced Steve to college and the service, and then he found a home at the dreaded enemy, United Airlines. But he didn't abandon modeling. Steve returned to Chicago with his first N scale Virginia Midland Railroad. Three other versions of the VM followed as it moved from a spare bedroom to the garage, and finally to the basement of a new home.

WHO WAS BILL JEWETT? Bill Jewett was a long time OPSIG member and an avid operator, and especially a gracious and kind friend to anyone who showed an interest in trains and operations. He revived the OPSIG in 1997 and ran it for almost ten years, not only constantly promoting the organization and organizing sessions and events, but also editing and producing our journal, *The Dispatcher's Office*. Many of us who joined the group back then came to know Bill, and in fact joined up as a result of his infectious enthusiasm and

promotion of the art of model railroad operations. He was Mr. OPSIG for so many years. Bill passed away unexpectedly on January 1st of 2006. His train collection was sold and the proceeds were used, at the request of his family, to start the Bill Jewett Memorial Fund, which supports the Bill Jewett Award. The award is given annually to the individual who promotes and contributes the most to OPSIG, Inc., and its stated goals of promoting the art of prototype model railroad operations. —Phil Monat