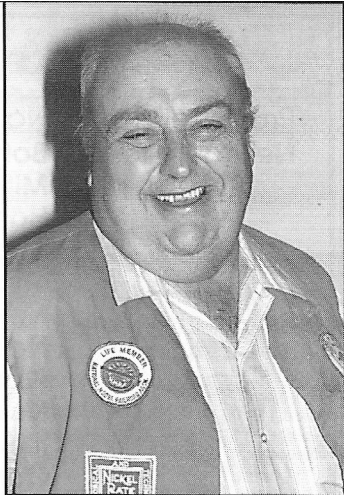


James L. Long, MMR #180

Jim Long is MMR 180 and is a member of the Lone Star Region, living in Pearland, Texas. Jim is 52 years old, has been married to his wife, Shirley, for 26 years and has one son, David, who is a junior at the University of Evansville. Jim has been a computer systems analyst with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for 31 years. He is also active with the Boy Scouts.



His wife contends that they built their house in Pearland just so he could obtain more space for a railroad. As any good husband should, he doesn't argue with her about this.

Jim grew up in a small Indiana town with an advantage over a lot of kids—the Clover Leaf Division of the Nickel Plate Road ran through the kitchen (it seemed like that, the whole house shook and all conversation stopped when a train went by). He received an American Flyer train set in 1947 and constructed an 8'x 14' empire. The trains were put aside while he attended Indiana University even though he did manage to get down to watch the Monon roll through Bloomington.

In 1960 he stumbled into a hobby shop and bought his first HO kit (would you believe a Labelle combine kit?). This got him started in scale model railroading. For some reason Jim gets turned on by truss rods, and he contends if it doesn't have truss rods, it won't stay on the track. He started his current railroad (the Gnaw Bone & Western) in 1983. It's a freelance, turn-of-the-century railroad running through the hills and hollows of southern Indiana. He picked the hilly south over the flatlands of Indiana because it's easier to hide tracks in tunnels and cuts than in corn fields. The era was chosen so he can have 36-foot, wood-framed, truss-rod cars.

Jim belongs to the Nickel Plate Historical and Technical Society, the NMRA, Division 8 of the Lone Star Region, and the Houston-based San Jacinto Model Railroad Club. He joined the NMRA in 1963 and became a Life Member in 1967. The aspects of the hobby he enjoys most are operations, building cars and structures (he has 30 passenger cars and over 150 freight cars, all either craftsman wood kits or scratchbuilt), and fellowship with other model railroaders.

Jim feels that anyone who belongs to an organization should help the organization in any way possible. He is a past president of the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club, served for years as the Publications Committee chairman in the Lone Star Region, and is currently an LSR director and region historian. He has also been a model contest judge and has given clinics at club shows, division meets, and LSR conventions. His railroad was one of the layout tours for Astrorail 89.

Jim has earned the Golden Spike Award and achievement certificates for Cars, Structures, Chief Dispatcher, Civil Engineer, Electrical Engineer, Association Volunteer, and Association Official. 