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# 1. CHAIRMAN

1. Develop the theme and focus of the convention. Important considerations are model and prototype railroading attractions, number of high-quality layouts, clinics, lodging facilities, and other activities in the area that will have broad appeal to convention attendees and their families.
2. The Chairman is responsible for the overall planning, organizing, accomplishment, and follow-up of all aspects of the convention, While many duties may be delegated, the Chairman has the ultimate responsibilities. "The buck stops here."
3. All aspects of the convention must continually be evaluated from the income and expenditure perspectives. The LSR provides a loan up to \$2,000 to help with convention start-up expenses. Thus the convention must be profitable to the extent that this loan can be completely repaid before any profits can be distributed. The chairman has the ongoing responsibility to ensure that accurate and complete accounting practices, such as expense reporting, are being followed by all persons involved in the convention.
4. Secure chairpersons for all functions and/or activities. Primary chairpersons should be in place by September prior to the start of the convention the following June.
5. Establish dates for convention. LSR conventions customarily run from Thursday to Sunday morning for breakfast, the annual business meeting, and Board meeting.
6. If operating sessions are to be included, the convention should start on Wednesday night with operating sessions and a limited number of clinics for early arrivers not operating.
7. Ensure that (written) contracts or agreements are entered into for all commercial arrangements, such as hotel, food catering, buses, and tours. The contacts with hotel or meeting venues must be approved in writing in advance by the Convention Review Committee composed of the LSR President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Regional Convention Chairman.
8. Any change in a contract or letter agreement must be discussed with the Convention Review Committee before being made, Any contractual change must be in writing and either signed or initiated by both parties. It is a legal document. An original of the contract, with all amendments, attachments, menu selections, etc. that is fully executed by both parties, is to be retained in the convention's permanent records file. It will become an attachment to the Convention Report.

9. All contacts shall show the name of our organization as "Lone Star Region NNfRA". No variations are permitted. This is essential so the LSR can build a positive corporate history to encourage hotels and others to offer better rates or deals.
10. Throughout the total convention period, the Chairman must monitor preparation of all registration, sales, and financial data necessary for the LSR Convention Report. Adraft Convention Report is to be sent to the Regional Convention Chairman by October 1 after the convention.
11. The final Convention Report is to be submitted to the Convention Review Committee by December 15 after the convention. All LSR By-Laws specified payments are to be submitted to the Regional Convention Chairman by December 31 of that year.
12. Develop the convention registration form showing hotel information and all activities (Rail and Non-Rail) that will require advance registration and/or payments. This form will be included in the Winter issue of *The Marker Lamp*, so it is imperative that it be sent in publishable format to the editor of *The Marker Lamp* before January 15 prior to the convention.
13. The convention website is to be set up by January 15 prior to the convention and include preliminary information about tours, clinics, and the registration form.
14. Reconfirm all arrangements one month before convention.
15. Confirm that all deposits have been paid by the convention treasurer at least one month before the convention. Generally, a contact is not considered secured unless a monetary deposit has been paid.
16. Develop the banquet program, including opening, program, recognitions, achievement program awards, contest awards, etc.
17. Create a logo for letterhead, advertising, etc. and distribute it to committee members by the October before the convention. Encourage its early use in promotions, etc.
18. Prepare *The Marker Lamp* articles for Winter and Spring issues due January 15 & April 15.
19. Meet with train clubs within the geographical area to provide information about the LSR, NMRA, and the convention. Secure membership mailing lists and request assistance and referrals for sources of printing, tours, equipment, etc.
20. Involve the entire Lone Star Region in the convention since LSR conventions are *Regional* events.

21. At the LSR convention immediately prior to the forthcoming convention, the Chairman presents, from the podium, a detailed description of the upcoming convention including layout tours, clinics, guest speakers, prototype tours, non-rail activities, and other announcements.
22. Conduct debriefings after the convention attended by all chairpersons to get feedback and assess what went right and wrong. Put together comments and idea books for future conventions. This report should be sent to the Regional Convention Chairman before October 1 after the convention.
23. After the convention, the Chairman will assure that thank-you letters are sent to all convention workers, district convention officials, LSR officials, sponsors, contributors, etc.
24. The chairman will prepare an article for Fall *The Marker Lamp* (deadline October 15) after the convention describing activities and thanking everyone that assisted in the convention.

## 2. CLINICS

1. **Establish a majority (15) of the clinics and presenters by the June LSR convention a year before your convention so promotional information can be distributed at that prior convention in addition to the presentation by the Chairman during the banquet.**
2. A minimum of 20 clinics starting Thursday night through Saturday afternoon is needed. If operating sessions are being held on Wednesday night, then a limited number of clinics should be scheduled also for other early arrivers who are not operating.
3. Have several "drawing card" clinicians trying to not duplicate recent clinics which may have been seen at other recent activities.
4. Develop clinic themes, such as prototype modeling or operations, but have a broad mix of subjects and scales to provide something for a variety of interests.
5. Send a survey form to each clinician several months before the convention requesting a brief description of his/her clinic which will be put on the convention website and the convention timetable booklet. Although each clinician is expected to provide his own computer, request detailed information about his digital projector and associated equipment situations. Some notable clinicians still use Kodak slide projectors.
6. At least 3 rooms will be needed daily for the clinics 2 for the Rail topics and 1 for the Non-Rails. One room should accommodate 50 people while the other two can be for 25. Tables may be necessary in one room arranged in conference style. Theater seating (chairs only) may be okay for the others. Table arrangement diagrams for each room should be provided to the hotel. Usually there is no charge for the initial setup, but expensive charges may be made for rearrangements.
7. If expensive audio/visual equipment, etc. is left in the rooms during breaks, lunch, etc., the clinic rooms must be locked or security personnel provided. This expensive equipment has been stolen in brief unguarded seconds. Digital projectors and screens should be placed in a lockable storage room when the clinic room is unoccupied for longer periods. i.e., overnight. It is the responsibility of the Host Group to provide the necessary security.

8. Assure that all required equipment, such as projectors, projector table, work tables, electric cords, computer cords, screen, flip-charts, markers, laser pointers, etc. is available on time and that everything is operating satisfactorily. Determine how the room lights can be dimmed, Develop sources of back-up equipment that can be quickly obtained in an emergency. Remember Murphy's law. Provide drinking water and glasses in each convention room unless such is an expensive extra charge by the hotel. Coffee and tea are not needed.
9. Determine if special materials to protect tables and carpet are necessary. Be sure they are used to avoid costly repair or cleaning charges by the venue. If necessary check with the venue about unusual situations. Remember Murphy's law.
10. Present personal introductions for each clinician prior to **every** clinic.
11. Provide lobby displays near the registration table promoting clinics, clinicians, times and/or time changes, and clinic locations
12. Provide hallway signs pointing to rooms and have signs at each clinic room door.
13. For out-of-state clinicians, provide airport pick-up and return, taking to layouts, etc.
14. Send thank-you letters to all clinicians. These can be a mail-merge type of form letter, but they must be personalized for each individual.

### 3. LAYOUT TOURS

1. Line up many layouts by June a year before the convention so layout owners can get the layouts ready.
2. Provide a variety of scales and types. Garden railroads and 7 h inch large scale "riding size" are becoming popular.
3. **Reconfirm all tours and open hours one month out and again just before the convention starts.** Post on the convention's lobby bulletin board any last-minute changes that occur after the convention timetable programs are printed.
4. Develop an interesting description of each layout. These should provide at a minimum: railroad name, scale, size, era and railroad names modeled, control system (Easy DCC, NCE), car handling (car cards, Rail Op, etc.) unusual features, driving instructions, layout location on premises (e.g. enter house by side door or garage)y hours and days open, etc. Provide owner's phone information for "lost" drivers. These are to be included in the convention registration packet.
5. **It is very important that the descriptions and pictures of each layout are posted on the convention's website no later than January 15 for early trip planners.**
6. Prepare accurate maps which must be test-driven by someone not very familiar with the area to check for understandability. GPS routes should be checked since sometimes they select impractical or inaccurate routes. Last-minute road changes or corrections should be noted on the convention lobby bulletin board and possibly insert correction sheets in the registration packets.
7. Provide sign-up sheets for ride-sharing on convention lobby bulletin boards starting on Thursday.
8. Provide tour stand-by lists for pre scheduled events at the registration desk.
9. Provide railroad crossbucks at each layout. These should be uniform in appearance to aid spotting when driving in unfamiliar territory. For those who do not already have these signs, they will need to be made and delivered. Sufficient lead-time may be needed for this construction.

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## 4. PROTOTYPE TOURS

1. Schedule many months in advance since these are tours of business operations.
2. **Confirm details of tours with the facilities one month and again two (2) weeks before convention.**
3. Determine the maximum number of people the business will accept at one time and in total.
4. Determine if the facility has any safety, special clothing, shoe requirements, etc. Be sure these are plainly displayed on the convention website, in the convention timetable, and finally checked just before the tour by the assigned tour guide.
5. If buses are to be provided, determine total costs and other contractual details. Investigate the bus company's accident record and insurance coverage. Get a formal contract with the bus company and obtain approval from the Convention Review Committee before signing. A deposit is generally required to secure the contract.
6. Determine how many buses are needed for each event and if multiple tours can be run by the same bus. For example, can the bus take a load to one tour and then another load to another event, and then return for pick-up of the first tour thus avoiding a bus sitting, with the meter running, while a tour is going on.
7. Determine where buses are to be loaded and unloaded at the hotel. Provide lobby signs advising loading times and locations.
8. Verify all arrangements with the bus company two (2) weeks before the convention.
9. Determine the last minute cut-off date for arranging the number of buses.
10. Vans could be utilized instead of buses or to supplement large buses for overflow registrations for some tours. Be sure to check on insurance liability.
11. Provide tour guides for each bus to assure destinations, schedules and regulations are maintained.
12. Assure tour guides are familiar with how to get to the destination, entry points, parking requirements, and contact personnel. On the ride to the site, the guide should provide information about the company and its railroad related operations.
13. Provide sign-up sheets at Reservation Desk for stand-bys in the event of cancellations.



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## 5. CONTESTS

1. The contest room should be approximately 1,000 square feet to accommodate 20 to 25 display tables for 100 entries. Determine if there are additional charges for this high number of tables. Because of the necessity of tight security, access to the room should be limited to one lockable door.
2. Tables should be the typical 30" in width by 72" or 96" in length. Table top covers are necessary, but table skirting is not. Determine if daily additional charges are made for table top covers and shirting since this can be \$5 to \$10 per table for 3 days amounting to a total of almost \$1,000. This is usually a negotiable item for the hotel. A diagram should be provided to the hotel showing the desired room and table set-up.
3. Ten chairs will be needed for judges and room personnel.
4. Very good lighting is essential to contest judging. Determine if additional lights, such as light-weight photography lights on stands, will be needed to achieve this. From a cost standpoint, do not rent these from the hotel. However, determine if the hotel has any restrictions or additional electrical use charges for such additional lighting.
5. The Host Group has the responsibility to provide personnel all day Thursday, Friday, and at such other times as directed by the Regional Contest Chairman and Convention Chairman to log in entries, assure placement at appropriate locations, **and provide security**. The room should be open for viewing entries on Saturday morning and after the banquet on Saturday night.
6. **VERY IMPORTANT** The Contest Room must never be left unattended and must be securely locked when closed.
7. The LSR Contest Committee has the responsibility for operation of the Contest Room, securing judges for the entries, judging, award preparation, and presentations at the banquet. They are not responsible for the security addressed previously. Judging is customarily done on Friday afternoon and night and requires considerable hours by up to a dozen people. Therefore, it is important to take this into consideration when planning other activities so the judges can attend these other events.
8. Detailed procedures governing the contest are available from the Regional Contest Chairman.

9. Enforce contest entry control procedures to assure all entry and achievement program forms are completed **thoroughly** at time entry is submitted.
10. Claim check procedures for all entries must be followed without exception.
11. Constant security must be provided from Thursday morning until the last entry is picked up by 10:00 Saturday night after the banquet.
12. Door locking and other security arrangements must be made with hotel personnel and then routinely checked to assure compliance. Verify with the hotel that the room will not be left open by a cleaning crew. Coordinate this with the convention Security Chief and the hotel's security staff.
13. The official convention photographer, who must also be qualified in close-up model photography, will take photographs of the winning entries immediately after judging while the contest room is closed.
14. Plaques, trophies, ribbons, special awards, etc. are provided by the LSRat no cost to the Host Group. After the convention, some awards may need to be engraved and mailed to recipients.
15. The Regional Contest Chairman will prepare an article for the Fall The Marker Lamp listing first, second, and third place winners in each category and special awards and thanking everyone who assisted in running the contests.

## 6. OPERATING SESSIONS

1. Provide a variety of operating layouts for Wednesday night, Thursday, Friday, or other times as necessary to accommodate registrants,
2. Restrict the number of operators to a predetermined "first to sign-up" total. Each layout owner is responsible for notifying the Operating Sessions Chairman of the total numbers of operators needed for each individual session and at what times for his layout.
3. To assure that registrants actually show up for an operating session, a \$10.00 charge for each operating session is to be collected as part of the convention registration. This \$10.00 will be refunded in cash to the registrant when he shows up for the operating session. Any unclaimed amounts shall be accounted for as "shared income for the operating sessions" on the Convention Report. The Operating Session Chairman is responsible for securing the necessary \$10.00 bills from the Convention Treasurer and delivering these bills to the layout owners prior to the operating sessions.
4. Provide cancellation list at Registration Desk so replacements can sign up for sessions.
5. Verify adequacy of layouts regarding operating interest, well-functioning equipment, and scheduling/control procedures.
6. Include description of operating layouts and selection sheet with convention registration.
7. Each layout must be manned by a sufficient number of experienced operators to assure smooth operations by inexperienced conventioners who may never have touched a model railroad throttle before.
8. Determine number of operators which can be accommodated by layout room and/or operating conditions.
9. It is very important to assure that every operator has transportation to and from operating sessions. This should not be left up to the participants since frequently they do not know each other or who has vehicles available. Appoint ride coordinators who will be present at the hotel staging point before every operating session.

10. Transportation and maps must be provided for all operators starting on Thursday. Out of five operators, nobody may have a car available. Clarity and accuracy of maps must be verified by having persons who are unfamiliar with the locale actually drive the route. Last minute road changes must be posted in the lobby display.
  
11. Send notifications of session participants, session dates and times, operators' phone and cell numbers to operators 2 weeks before convention so they can arrange carpools and map out locations on GPS devices.

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## 7. REGISTRATION

1. **The total convention registration fees, all events that require pre registration, tour payments, clinic payments, or special order merchandise must be accurately determined by January 10 so that the final convention registration form can be developed.**
2. **The Registration form must be included in the Winter issue of *The Marker Lamp* to avoid the over \$1,000 cost of a separate mailing. The registration form must be approved by the Regional Convention Chairman before it is released to *The Marker Lamp*.**
3. **The deadline for the complete registration form to be at the ML editor is January 15.** Another registration form will be included in the Spring ML, but that issue probably will not reach the members until mid-May which is a little late for planning purposes.
4. The registration form shall state that a special LSRhotel room rate will be available only until the predetermined cut-off time established in the hotel contract. Thereafter, the hotel has stated that it will be first come, first served usually at a higher rate.
5. Provide incentives for early registration by May 15 such as price discounts and/or gifts. This is vitally important to sufficient planning.
6. Duplicate registration information, forms and hotel information must be set up on the convention website by **January 15** and provisions for early registrations must be in place at that time also.
7. ***By no later than June 1 immediately before the convention, an accurate determination of the number of people that will be attending the convention is one of the most critical items.***
8. The hotel and caterer require notification of the number of meals usually by 12:00 noon on the Wednesday before the Saturday night banquet. This will determine the meal charges and obligations of the hotel under the hotel contract. Thus, if a number of unexpected registrants show up on Thursday through Saturday, they probably will not be able to attend the banquet. This will create an unbelievable furor that will haunt the convention city for decades! Work out an arrangement for last-minute banquet and breakfast meal count changes if at all possible.
9. A Well-tested computer application is essential for pre-convention registration and on-site registration.

10. This registration computer application must use a commonly available program; have bullet-proof procedures, and provide sufficient options to handle almost any situation. Registration personnel on duty must be computer literate and able to handle basic computer functions. The application developer must be available for handling involved situations. The extensive registration application, developed by Bill Gray in San Antonio using Microsoft Excel, has proven itself to be excellent in recent conventions.
11. Registration form information is to be extracted into planning controls for a variety of convention activities and made available to the convention staff.
12. A convention welcome and registration booth is to be set up in the hotel lobby on 3:00 Wednesday Afternoon prior to the convention. Highly visible signs announcing the LSR convention are to be displayed as approved by the hotel.
13. The registration booth is to be manned from 4:00 pm until 7:00 pm on Wednesday, 8:00 am until 7:00 pm on Thursday and Friday, from 8:00 am until 12:00 noon Saturday, and from 5:00 pm until 7:15 pm on Saturday afternoon. Registration personnel must be knowledgeable in the general operation and schedule of the convention, tours, operating sessions, etc. since they will create the first impression of the attendees of the convention.
14. If a large registration is anticipated, it may be desirable to have two registration lines for A--M and N--Z to speed up the process. Special prizes, raffle items, convention merchandise, LSR and NMRA information should be prominently displayed at the booth.
15. Each registrant (LSR member and registered spouse) will receive a pre-prepared envelope containing nametag, all clinic schedules (usually in the form of a timetable), layout and prototype tours and maps, meal tickets, contest information and voting forms, silent auction, hotel layout, other railroad or tourist interest items, and restaurants near the hotel.
16. Bill Gray's registration computer program produces name tags. Be sure that the complete name of the registrant is shown on the tag in large font. Name tags will have options of either pins or neckstrings.

## 8. FINANCE TREASURER

Extensive financial, membership, registration, and attendance data are available about the Lone Star Region conventions and other LAR activities over the past 10 years. These provide information for preparing projections, budgets, and budget vs. actual variance analyses using standard business practices and accounting procedures and readily available computer programs such as Microsoft Excel.

1. Prepare projections of convention income and expenses.
2. Develop budget and on-going status financial reports for all financial aspects of convention.
3. In conjunction with the Convention Chairman and applicable convention chairs, determine pricing for activities and tours.
4. In conjunction with registration and auction chairs, account for monies received and disbursed.
5. Establish and balance a bank account exclusively for conventional financial transactions.
6. Write all expenses checks with co-signer controls.
7. Prepares periodic reports showing the actual convention expenditures compared to the budget.
8. Assures that the Convention Chairman and all Activities Chairpersons understand and approve such reports.
9. Determine what can be included in registration costs and what would be extra fares, such as tours requiring buses and/or admission costs.
10. Make financial settlement with the hotel at the close of the convention as provided in the contract with the hotel.
11. Within sixty (60) days after the convention, assure that all accounts payable and accounts receivable are settled.
12. Prepare detailed and summary financial reports for the Chairman and the LSR personnel.

13. In conjunction with the Convention Chairman, Registrar, and other personnel, complete the Registration and Financial Sections of the prescribed Lone Star Region Convention Report. This Report will be provided in Microsoft Word and Excel formats by the Regional Convention Chairman.
14. The By-Laws of the Lone Star Region in Article V— Conventions prescribe certain payments and their deadlines which must be made to the Lone Star Region. The first payment to the LSR is the per capita fee of \$2.00 per registrant family that is due no later than 30 days after the end of the convention (Article V, Paragraph 5).
15. A draft Convention Report is to be sent to the Regional Convention Chairman by October 1 after the convention.
16. The final Convention Report is to be submitted to the Convention Review Committee by December 15 after the convention. All payments specified by the LSR By-Laws are to be submitted to the Regional Convention Chairman by December 31 of that year.



## 9. PUBLICITY

1. The proven publicity concept is to provide a constant barrage of "developing" stories frequently to all available outlets. Recent experiences have proven this works such as almost doubling the registrations in the final six week of a remote convention. You can't argue with success.
2. Place convention stories and notices in all possible railroad and convention area publications, TV and radio stations, internet sites, and everywhere else.
3. Determine cut-off dates by which these notices must be received by above publications,
4. Distribute large posters to convention area hobby shops, etc. Offer to assist shop owner/manager in hanging posters to assure it is done and is very visible to customers.
5. Distribute notices and hand-out sheets to local, state, southwest, and mid-continent hobby shops.
6. Make follow-up calls to most important local and distant hobby shops to see how promotion is going and if they need additional sheets or information.
7. During the convention contact local newspapers, TV, and radio for on-the-spot coverage.

## 10. PRINTING

1. Pre-convention advertising sheets and posters.
2. Convention Information Booklet Timetable Schedule -- Since this is a major expense, off-set the cost by selling advertising pages or by accepting contributions from sponsors.
3. Layout tours, prototype tours, and operating sessions maps.
4. Convention registration forms
5. Clinic Signs
6. Banquet tickets
7. Name Tags
8. Welcome banner for hotel main entrance, ballroom entrance, etc.
9. Hallway and room posters

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# 11.AUCTIONS

## **Silent Auction**

1. A separate document contained in this LSR Convention Handbook contains an excellent discussion about running a silent auction. It is required reading for the auction personnel.
2. The silent auction room should be approximately 800 to 1,000 square feet to accommodate 20 display tables for entries. Determine if there are additional charges for this high number of tables. Because of the necessity of security, access to the room should be limited to one lockable door.
3. Tables should be the typical 30" in width by 72" or 96" in length. Table top covers are necessary, but table skirting is not. Determine if daily additional charges are made for table top covers and skirting since this can be \$5 to \$10 per table for 3 days amounting to a total of almost \$1,000. This is usually a negotiable item for the hotel. A diagram should be provided to the hotel showing the desired room and table set-up.
4. Four chairs and a table will be needed near the door for room personnel.
5. The Host Group has the responsibility to provide personnel all day Thursday, Friday, and at such other times as directed by the Silent Auction Chairperson and Convention Chairman to log in entries, assure placement at appropriate locations, **and provide security.**
6. **VERY IMPORTANT** The Silent Auction Room must never be left unattended and must be securely locked when closed.
7. Issue consecutive entry numbers which become the most important control for sorting sold and not-sold items.
8. Place items on tables in entry number order rather than by type. This may require constant shifting of items by auction workers to provide sufficient space,
9. A well-tested computer application is essential for auctions.
10. This auction computer application must use a commonly available program; have bullet-proof procedures, and provide sufficient options to handle almost any situation. Auction personnel on duty must be computer literate and able to handle basic computer functions. Application developers must be available for handling involved situations.

11. A silent auction computer program developed by a LSR member has been used very successfully at numerous LSR auctions in recent years. This program will produce extracts listing the highest bidder for sold items and listing all items bought by LSR members by badge number.
12. Many people, at least 6, are needed to collate items bought and sack them by highest bidder, as determined by computer lists.
13. A computer list for items that receive no bids (not sold) will be used to collect these items in sacks for return to owners. A second team of workers will handle these items.
14. The silent auction treasurer will be responsible for receiving and disbursing payments on the spot.
15. Time schedule for pick-ups shall be prominently displayed and announcements made at the banquet in the event items still have not been picked up.

### **Live Auction**

1. Entertaining auctioneers can result in fast paced auctions and generate higher bids for items.
2. Computer application will produce extracts listing highest bidder for sold items and listing all items bought by LSR member by badge number.
3. Many people are needed to collate items bought and sack them by highest bidder, as determined by computer lists.
4. The treasurer will be responsible for receiving and disbursing payments on the spot.
5. Time schedule for pick ups shall be prominently displayed at the banquet and announcements made by the banquet key speaker.
6. Provide fan-type of cards for bidders to hold up to show their convention registration number.
7. Personnel needed to keep track of the winning bidder, the sold price, and the payments received.

## 12. TV MONITORING AND VIDEO TAPING

1. Determine requirements for digital photography of clinic presentations and activities.
2. Determine legal ramifications of recording.
3. Evaluate sales potential of clinic tapes.
4. Secure services of qualified videographer(s).

## 13. SCHEDULE & TIMETABLE

1. ***The final convention schedule or timetable is to be developed by May 15 preceding the start of the convention so that printing can be completed and checked with sufficient time for corrections.***
2. Develop project time-lines (Gantt charts) for establishing critical start times and then maintaining coordination, control, and preventing overlaps.
3. The schedule should be prepared using a commonly available computer program, such as Microsoft Excel or Microsoft Word, so it can be electronically distributed and by hard copy for use by various chairpersons and convention personnel.
4. Maintaining the master schedule is basically a one-person job to avoid conflicts.
5. Samples of effective convention schedules and program booklets are available as examples.
6. Sell advertising space to sponsors to help pay for the schedule booklet.
7. Convention schedule and program booklet should be a size that will conveniently fit into a back pocket or a purse.
8. Changes which occur after booklet printing must be prominently displayed on the lobby bulletin boards. Supplemental sheets may need to be included in the registration packet or placed at the Reservation Desk.

## 14. NON-RAIL TOURS

1. A lady chairperson should be selected.
2. At the LSR convention immediately prior to the forthcoming convention, the Non-Rail Chairlady presents the descriptions about the Non-Rail primary events.
3. It is essential to have backup plans.
4. Registration forms provide information on tours and costs. Pre-registration is critical to determine bus or other transportation needs.
5. Determine how many people a business or tour site can accommodate.
6. The daily daytime TV shows "Good Morning Texas" on Channel 8 and "Positively Texas" on Channel 11 provide many interesting ideas on places, people, and things in the Metroplex.
7. Transportation needs are a most critical element in this activity. Coordinate with counterpart Prototype Tours chairperson.
8. Plan a variety of family activities
9. Reconfirm all tours and open hours just before convention. Post any changes that occur after programs are printed on the lobby bulletin board.
10. Refer to the Section 4 - Prototype Tours portion of this manual for other suggestions.

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## 15. NON-RAIL CLINICS

1. It is probably better to have a separate chairlady for the clinics who will work closely with the Non-Rail Tours chairlady.
2. ***Backup plans are essential.***
3. Develop clinic themes can be developed but have a broad mix of subjects to provide something for a variety of interests. The daily daytime TV shows provide many interesting ideas on places, people, and things in the convention area. Possibly have a separate auction for the ladies.
4. Send a survey form to each clinician several months before the convention requesting a brief description of his/her clinic which will be put on the convention website and the convention timetable booklet. Although each clinician is expected to provide his own computer, request detailed information about his digital projector and associated equipment situations. Some Notable clinicians still use Kodak slide projectors.
5. Determine best room setup for all clinics and prepare a drawing so the hotel can set up the table and chairs accordingly, Usually there is no charge for the initial setup, but may charge for rearrangements.
6. Assure that all required equipment, such as projectors, projector table, work tables, electric cords, computer cords, screen, flip-charts, markers, laser pointers, etc. is available on time and that everything is operating satisfactorily, Determine how the room lights can be dimmed. Develop Sources of back-up equipment that can be quickly obtained in an emergency. Remember Murphy's Law. Provide drinking water and glasses in each convention room unless such is an expensive extra charge by the hotel. Coffee and tea are not needed.
7. If expensive audio/visual equipment, etc. is left in the rooms during breaks, lunch, etc. The clinic rooms must be locked or security personnel provided. This expensive equipment has been stolen in brief unguarded seconds. Digital projectors and screens should be placed in a lockable storage room when the clinic room is unoccupied for longer periods. i.e., overnight. It is the responsibility of the Host Group to provide the necessary security.
8. For clinicians not directly associated with railroading, banquet meal tickets could be purchased and given as partial compensation.



9. Reconfirm all clinics two weeks before convention and again just a week out. Post any changes that occur after programs are printed on the conventions lobby bulletin board.
10. Determine if special materials to protect tables and carpet are necessary. Be sure they are used to avoid costly repair or cleaning charges by the venue. If necessary check with the venue about unusual situations. Remember Murphy's law.
11. Present personal introductions for each clinician prior to every clinic.
12. Provide lobby displays near the registration table promoting clinics, clinicians, times and/or time changes, and clinic locations
13. Present personal introductions for each clinician prior to every clinic.
14. Provide lobby displays near the registration table promoting clinics, clinicians, times and/or time changes, and clinic locations
15. Provide hallway signs pointing to rooms and have signs at each clinic room door.
16. For out-of-state clinicians, provide airport pick-up and return, taking to layouts, etc.
17. Send thank-you letters to all clinicians. These can be a mail-merge type of form letter, but they must be personalized for each individual.

## 16. ARTS & CRAFTS CONTEST & AWARDS

1. The entries for this activity will be located in the same room as the railroad model entries,
2. Coordinate with the Contest Chairman for the Rails about railroad contests for all activities, judging, etc.

## 17. COMPANY STORE

1. Items offered in the LSR's Company Store are restricted to LSR and NMRA items, such as special cars, plaques, clothing, etc.
2. Various historical societies, such as Santa Fe, Katy, Burlington, Chicago and North Western, and Union Pacific, have membership information and items not usually found in hobby shops.
3. A separate small room may be desirable; otherwise a lobby display area could be set up and taken down on a daily basis. The lobby display area should be located away from the registration area to avoid congestion.
4. Contact NMRA headquarters to determine if a display assortment of the fact sheets, pins, clothing, and numerous other items could be borrowed so people could see what is available.
5. Determine from previous conventions what will be the realistic number of convention souvenirs that may be sold.

## 18. AWARDS & TROPHIES

1. Contest ribbons, plaques, awards, achievement program plaques and other presentations are the responsibility of either the LSR or the presenting organization. These expenses are not charged to the Host Group.
2. Coordinate displays and presentation plans with the Convention Chairman.
3. Offer free registration, maybe limo service for charter members. Need to identify who still are alive and able to attend.

## 19. DECORATIONS & CENTERPIECES

1. Need *super* slogans
2. Outside banner for hotel entrance
3. Inside Welcome banners
4. Banquet table centerpieces:

Made or purchased

Give away at banquet perhaps using pre-attached stickers under chairs

5. For the banquet tables centerpieces and other room decorations, determine what the hotel will provide and set up with no additional charges. Keep the Convention Chairman informed.
6. If the Host Group will be doing additional decorations at the banquet, coordinate with hotel staff the time period when the decorators can do their work.

## 20. CONVENTION PHOTOGRAPHER

1. Take action pictures throughout the convention of clinics, layouts, contests, auctions, Non-Rail Activities, banquet activities, award presentations and speakers, special guests, breakfast and business meetings.
2. Official convention photographers, who must also be qualified in close-up model photography, will take photographs of winning entries immediately after judging while the contest room is closed.
3. Assist Convention Chairman in preparing selected photographs for publication in the Fall issue of *The Marker Lamp*.

## 21. VIDEO & MOVIE ROOM

1. Need a small room (interior or with curtains) for videos or movies.
2. Use home-type TV's and DVd players to avoid costs of renting commercial equipment.
3. Solicit club members and area model railroaders for videos that could be loaned for these showings.
4. Arrange for monitoring every 30 minutes to assure continuous showing of videos.
5. Equipment and videos must be secured from theft.

## 22. COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

1. Develop computer applications for the following:
  - 1.1 Schedules
  - 1.2 Registration
  - 1.3 Auctions
  - 1.4 Contests
2. These computer applications must use a commonly available program; have bullet-proof procedures, and provide sufficient options to handle almost any situation. Convention personnel on duty must be computer literate and able to handle basic computer functions. Application developer must be available for handling involved situations.
3. Database sorts and extracts customized for applications listed in paragraph 1 above are to be prepared and tested weeks before June convention.
4. Keep the Regional Convention Chairman informed about these computer applications.



## 23. SECURITY

1. Secure a Security Chief to coordinate security with hotel security personnel.
2. Security personnel shall check for Convention name badges at clinics, contests, auctions, company stores, and banquets.
3. Constant security is required for the Contest Room. This room must be locked at night and during the banquet.
4. Constant security is required for the Silent Auction Room. This room must be locked at night and during the banquet.
5. If digital projectors, screens and computers are in clinic rooms, these rooms must also be secured what clinics are not being held.
6. Do not depend upon the hotel to provide security.
7. Locked rooms must be checked periodically to assure that all items are secure.
8. Security personnel assure that maximum room capacities are not exceeded.

## 24. HOTEL & BANQUET COORDINATOR

1. Assist the Convention Chairman in contractual and banquet event order meetings with the hotel.
2. Coordinate all convention activities with hotel staff.
3. Assure that the hotel carries out all of its responsibilities and agreements as provided in the contract.
4. Assure that adequate tables, chairs and required equipment are available for registration, clinics,
5. contests, banquets, and all other functions.
6. Assure that meals at Saturday banquet and Sunday breakfast are set up and served as agreed.
7. Watch for additional or hidden charges from the hotel, and immediately notify the Treasurer or Chairmanshould such occur.
8. Arrange for and coordinate the bus loading area.
9. Assist Security Chief in those responsibilities.

## 25. SPONSORS, CONTRIBUTORS and DOOR PRIZES

1. Get sponsors or advertisers to help defray convention costs.
2. Get door prizes from manufacturers, dealers, hobby shops or any other source.
3. Sell raffle tickets during registration from Thursday afternoon through Saturday afternoon.
4. Handle raffle drawings and prizes during the banquet.
5. One very successful raffle was to guess the number of individual pieces in a scratch-built car. The winner got the car.
6. Every attendee should get a door-prize ticket. Hold a drawing at the banquet or at some other time. Avoid putting door prize tickets in just some registration packets.