



Houston Operators Of Tiny Electric Railway Systems

HOOTERS 2006

In early November 2006, 54 modelers from Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas descended on Houston for a weekend of operating on model railroad layouts. Half of the operators came from the Fort Worth-Dallas area.

The Houston Operators Of Tiny Electric Railway Systems (HOOTERS) included 20 layouts, and operating crews ranged from nine to two participants. Each guest operated on four layouts during the three-day event, which included a Saturday night social and Italian dinner.

HOOTERS is one leg of a three-city rotation between Tulsa, Dallas, and Houston that meets each year. The event started in 1998 as part of the Dallas Interchange. The initial Dallas Interchange featured 30 out-of-towners operating on nine layouts in Dallas.

Don Bozman, a HOOTERS event coordinator, said the original purpose of the event was nothing noble.

“We just wanted to entertain ourselves on different, oftentimes new (to us) layouts,” he said by e-mail. “The underlying result, however, has been to spread the joy of operations to other modelers. Many of us found additional enjoyment from realistic operations on our miniature railroads, as opposed to just orbiting trains around the layout (but that’s a lot of fun, too).”

“Over time, we have attempted to invite more and more people to these events. The consequence has been the need to build (or rebuild) more operations-oriented layouts.”

The Event was held in 2007 as the Dallas Interchange and in 2008 as the Tulsa Line 2008 Operations Meet. It will return to Houston as HOOTERS in October 2009.

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