



Southern Michigan Railroad Society

Rail way Express

Number 83

A Newsletter For and About The Members of SMRS

3rd&4th Quarter 2009

Engine #75 Back In Service!!!!

By Lance Charter

After many setbacks in getting the locomotive generator #1 repaired, we finally had a break in our luck with the installation of a used generator from a 44 ton locomotive that was being scrapped. Back in July during an attempt to start the locomotive for a run, the crew discovered smoke coming from the generator and shut everything down and inspected the generator for any signs of fire. Members **Bob Kalb** and **Richard Loucks**, and often used mechanic Carl Sweeny inspected the wiring and with help from member Robert Hall, found a burnt commutator and some bad windings. It was decided that the spare generator in the shop should be repaired and used to replace the bad one. The generator was sent to a shop, and brought back to be installed and tested; unfortunately this generator did not work either. With time running short before Fall Festival and fall color tours, **Cynthia** contacted Dennis Lavender of Northstar Locomotives in Newark, OH to inquire if he had a fix for us. Mr. Lavender did in fact have a generator that he had removed from a 44-tonner that was being scrapped. (Sacramento Northern 145.) He stated that it had worked when removed, so with the help of members **Dan** and **Marc Kalis**, who own a trucking company, the generator was brought to Clinton and **Marc, Dan, Robert Hall** and **Richard** got it put in and running the Thursday evening before fall festival. It ran beautifully all weekend and continues to do so. The future plans are to have the originally repaired generator re-repaired by the same shop as they assured us it worked when they sent it back, and the damaged generator is also being repaired so that we can get it installed in the #2 side so we will have 2 working generators. (Something that has never been as long as it has been on SMRS property and according to **Bob Hall** who worked with this loco before it came to us, never worked for them either) The membership owes a great debt of gratitude to all the members who worked over the last 6-8 weeks to get #75 up and running again!! They include; **Richard Loucks, Dan** and **Marc Kalis, Robert Kalb, Robert Hall, Mike Tabone, David Lau, Rick Westphal, Cynthia Given** and Mechanic Carl Sweeny.

Here and there

By Robert MacDowell

We're not the only ones. In Maquoketa, Iowa, another non-profit has preserved another Clinton Engines factory. In 2000, the city acquired the factory complex. Plans to refurbish the

whole complex didn't work out, but this was an important industry to the town's history, and they didn't want all signs of the facility to be eradicated. They preserved one of the last (and quite handsome) buildings. The Jackson County historical society took possession in 2004, and began a restoration project which ended four years later.

Michigan was once covered with a vast network of electric railways, along with Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. The interurbans went as fast as 100 miles per hour. (In fact our Chicago South Shore cars are legacies of that time.) But Michigan streetcars and interurbans were gone by the 1930s, and barely a dozen cars survive - and among them only four coaches. One of those left the region - a **Detroit streetcar** was sold by the Ohio Railway Museum, and went to Seashore Trolley Museum. While we congratulate Seashore for their remarkable and rare gain - it is a shame there was nowhere for the car to come in Michigan.

Speaking of them -- The Seashore Trolley Museum undertook the restoration of **Atlantic Shore Line 100**, a locomotive originally used to haul freight on that electric interurban line. The project was funded using a TEA grant (Federal and state money) of over \$100,000. The car had suffered terrible rot and decay in the main beams, and had been parked in a carbarn for 50 years. None of this stopped it from moving to the restoration shop under its own power, via a stinger to its trolley pole.

Mid-Continent Railway Museum just completed a **million dollar restoration** - a fish car. The "Badger #2" was purpose built to carry fish from hatcheries to Wisconsin streams. It resembled a passenger coach, and also had a kitchen and sleeper space for four attendants and guests. After fisheries switched to trucks, it was bought for an office, and became the first car purchased by Mid-Continent. A remarkable restoration for this museum's beloved car.

Two brand-new steam locomotives were unveiled this year. The Leviathan is an 1860's 4-4-0, a recreation of one of the Central Pacific engines which built the Transcontinental Railroad. Meanwhile U.K. railfans completed a replica of an A1 Tornado - a feat comparable to recreation of a New York Central Hudson. The Tornado is fully equipped to operate on U.K. mainlines.

In Cleveland, there was a privately owned railway museum called Trolleyville. Its owner, Gerald Brookins, passed away, and the site was sold. The car collection, all kept carefully indoors - was transferred to a nonprofit foundation, and stored indoors by the local light-rail system (many cars were compatible with Cleveland's light rail.) Great plans were laid for a high profile trolley museum in Cleveland. But the mayor changed, the

government backed out, and the foundation was given an eviction notice: Get the cars out. They scrambled to raise funds simply to pay their accrued debt. Finally an alliance of the more successful railway museums swept in to save them. The cars are being scattered to the four winds. Some are going home to Illinois. Two cars from Toledo area interurbans are leaving the region. Even the line car "OX", a former Michigan interurban coach (possibly the last one surviving) is leaving the region.

Illinois Railway Museum had to cancel a "Thomas the Tank Engine" weekend **due to flooding**. It could've been worse - the Galveston Railway Museum and Mid-Continent Railway Museum both suffered devastating floods from which their collections may never recover. The cautionary note is - don't locate a museum in a flood plain, even if the land is cheap.

Newsletter Flashbacks

Every issue starting in February, we'll go through each of the SMRS's previous newsletters. The file at SMRS is not complete; some of the earlier Cross Tracks are missing. If you can help, we'd love to see copies of your early Cross Tracks.

New (sort of) Faces behind the Railway Express!!

Member **Robert MacDowell** of California will be assisting in the editing and distribution of the **Railway Express**. He decided that this is something he can do to help the society from the West Coast. So for everyone that thinks they are too far away to help, **Robert** is proof you can help wherever you are!! Welcome to the editorial staff **Robert!!!**



New Life Member!!!!

At the December board meeting, the directors decided to add one more well deserving name to the SMRS roster. This person has spent the past 10 years putting countless hours of time, money and sweat into **Southern Michigan Railroad** helping it stay on track through all its trials and bumpy track. The society owes a great debt of gratitude to the exiting President of the board and Southern Michigan Railroad's newest life member, **Cynthia Given!!!!**

About Town

We're glad to see that there's a new restaurant in town, the Clinton Coney Island, at the main traffic light downtown, catty-corner from the Clinton Hotel. It's your basic Coney Island, with breakfasts, Coney dogs and burgers, and all sorts of Greek fare.

Next time you come out to volunteer, stop in and support our local businesses and fill up with energy for your day at SMRS!!!

From the President

By Cynthia Given

I know there are many of you with questions and you desire to have this November election behind us, but, unfortunately, that is not to be the case by the end of this year. Our last meeting with the Election Inspector was held Wednesday Jan 6th, where we had been going through the various ballot envelopes and membership applications. We meet for about 2 to 3 hours each session.

Let me try to explain what is going on in the meetings, which I hope will allow you to understand why it is taking so long.

The following people are present at the meetings: Michael Brooks -- the election inspector; and as he calls them, The Tecumseh Group -- Chuck Gross, Tim Goligoski, and Mark Dobronski; and the SMRS Group -- Ernie Jeschke, Dana Dever (our attorney), and myself. The meetings are arranged, mostly in the evenings or weekends, when all of us can get together. Ernie and I have pretty much made our schedule as clean as possible to meet any date that is selected.

SMRS has reviewed the proxies and attendance records, and the duplicated copies of the ballots of "The Tecumseh Group" and challenges have been made such as irregularities in procedure, proxy voting issues, and who has authority to vote (member versus non member), etc. The membership applications have been reviewed that were submitted for the members that this group represents, and challenges made such as changes made to the applications prior to being authorized by the member, missing information, etc. The SMRS Group will continue to uphold the SMRS bylaws as adopted by the membership.

"The Tecumseh Group" is now going through SMRS member proxies, the attendance record at the annual meeting, and the ballot envelopes (no ballots have been removed from the envelopes at this time) received via mail and in person at the meeting. They are also reviewing the membership files for each member that has submitted a ballot to verify their eligibility to vote. They have made challenges such as member at the meeting but ballot received via mail; proxy to vote but ballot mailed, payment not received timely, email application subject to verification of date received.

In total we have surpassed the halfway mark in this review process, with a total of over 400 ballots cast by the membership. Before the ballots may be counted, the voter registration list must be certified for all eligible voters.

Based on information provided by a member of the Tecumseh Group, the membership applications submitted and received via email on August 31, 2009 were challenged and the accusation made that the Secretary and President "backdated" these applications, receiving them after the 8-31 cutoff, so that the members could vote in the November election. Before the ballots may be counted, the voter registration list must be certified for all eligible voters.

They did not find it possible that over 200 members could be registered and paid for in a three (3) day time span. This resulted in Pat Robertson and Cynthia Given taking their computers to a computer company selected by the Election Inspector and having them review the email and dates associated with the computers and the actual email servers. Both computers and the email applications passed the review.

Continued on page 4

Prime paint on the GE 44-tonner!

By Robert MacDowell

The GE 44-ton locomotive, Western Maryland 75, was painted four years ago. But now the paint was blistering and peeling. Longtime member Robert MacDowell was visiting from California, and took on the challenge.

The first step was diagnosing what went wrong with the paint, so we wouldn't repeat the mistake. The paint was failing three ways. First, large areas were "blistering away" and exposing bare metal. It turns out my other museum, the Western Railway Museum (WRM) in California, had a very similar problem on two GE units, SN 652 and 654. They traced it back to mill scale on the steel at time of manufacture. Normally that's removed in manufacturing to prevent exactly this from happening. Say what you will, GE's original paint lasted a very long time.

The first repaint was done by Western Maryland. In some areas, this layer separated easily from the original paint with a putty knife. Other areas it held fast. This suggests poor surface prep in WM's paint shop, either a failure to scuff-sand, or light oil contamination (such as not changing rags often enough when wiping down.) That was the second problem. The third problem was that the newest topcoat was oil-sensitive and crinkled up in some locations. In the file was the original label from the paint. It was top quality latex paint. Apparently latex is never compatible with oily areas.

Prep was taken very seriously. There are probably close to 100 volunteer hours in the prep from at least 5 people. Loose rust was wire brushed, and then the rusty surface was brushed down with "rust converter". This is basically phosphoric acid. A few holes and dings were filled with West System epoxy, a versatile system which allows anything from wood gluing to fiberglass repair (GMDH-3!) to bondo-style body filler.

Prime coating was started with Awlgrip 545 primer, which is an excellent 2-part epoxy primer made for boats. Expensive, but worth it because it lasts so long. It is quite possibly the most durable primer available for bare wood, and it can be top coated with almost anything. It also holds up better if "left in primer" for awhile. Normally it comes in gray, but Robert didn't specify when ordering, and got white primer. Pigment doesn't affect durability of a primer, but Awlgrip gray "covers" a lot better. The white was looking pretty splotchy. Still, this turned out to be a lucky break.

The key problem is the blistering. The blistering is going to come back in a few years unless all the paint is stripped to bare metal. That's not really practical without a proper shop. So the decision was made to make this a "quickie" paint job. Only black areas would be painted, as yellow handrails, radiators and trim were holding up OK.

Without shop-quality prep, there was no point using Awlgrip. The switch was made to garden variety Rustoleum. Everybody knows Rustoleum comes in brown - against the white Awlgrip, we'd have ourselves a "Guernsey" locomotive! What a pleasant surprise, then, to visit the hardware store and find Rustoleum also comes in white. This would be a perfect match for the Awlgrip. A day of painting later and we have a "white ghost"! Ready for finish coat, which are the plans for 2010!

Yahoo Group

If you didn't already know SMRS has a Yahoo! Page. Subscribe @ SMRSMembers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com you will be asked for your name, address and member number for verification.

SMRS MOTORCAR MEET

AUGUST 30, 2009

Sunday the 30th started quite early for some as we got ready for the motorcar meet at Tecumseh North Yard. Motorcar operators started showing up by 7:15 am to set-on at Bidwell St. Pat Robertson, Lance Charter and Mike Skroke were there to direct the set-on and register all the cars. By 9am the last car had arrived and the safety meeting started with 17 cars and 30 persons in attendance. Pat Robertson welcomed everyone and made introductions of SMRS President Cynthia Given, Maintenance Superintendent Richard Loucks and Trainmaster Lance Charter. Cynthia made a few comments welcoming everyone and Lance also pointed out the motorcar operators who had put many long hours in during the year to improve the track and cut brush. Lance also touched on upcoming events and a few points of interest along the track that folks would be riding by.

Operators from all over Michigan, Ohio and Canada then started their cars and headed south towards Raisin Center. After a brief stop to watch a passing CN train along the NS and to turn their cars, everyone headed back toward Clinton for lunch. After a hearty lunch prepared by Cynthia, Richard and Neil Smitherman, everyone headed for 1 more round trip ending back at Tecumseh North Yard to reload and begin their trip home. During the second layover in Clinton, a photo shoot was coordinated by member Chuck Pearson to approximate the photo taken in 1985 during the first annual NARCOA meet held at SMRS.

There were cars of every size and vintage including a car from the Shepard historical group, which our RS-1 #20 is on loan to for static display. Members of that group had painted the motorcar in the Wabash blue and grey that is the original colors of #20 and #21.

Calendar of Events

-February 13th

Planning Session 12pm

S&E 4:30pm

Board Meeting

7pm Clinton

-March 13th

Planning Session 12pm

S&E 4:30pm

Board Meeting

7pm Clinton

Planning Sessions

By Lance Charter

We will again be holding planning sessions in February and March starting at 12 noon the second Saturday of the month. February's session will deal with the operating schedule and March will cover goal planning and membership involvement. These meetings are open to all members to seek input on the listed topics.

Keep watching for upcoming information on a new membership program!!!!

Charity Poker

SMRS has been raising funds by hosting charity poker events. These events are held at state licensed rooms and charities must get the license and provide at least 2 people per day to handle all the money transactions. The poker room supplies the room, cards, dealers and chips. Each charity can host up to 4 events per year with each event running 4 days. We have had a few hiccups during our 2009 events which kept the money made down, but we are back on track for 2010 and hopefully we can make some much needed money. The first event for 2010 will be located at: **Vision Lanes** (38250 Ford Road, Westland) for **02/12/2010 -02/15/2010 (Fri-Monday)** hours are 5pm until 2am. We need at least 2 people per night to operate, and if we have more we can operate in shifts. It is very easy work, just buying and selling chips and filling out the record forms. If you are interested in helping please contact **Pat Robertson** (acrmc@comcast.net) or **Lance Charter** (lcidalaw2@hotmail.com).

Brush, Brush everywhere....

By Lance Charter

Several members have been busy attacking the brush along the line and the results are quite remarkable. **Mike Tabone, Andrew Weise, Tyler Hartmann and Andrew Bond** have attacked several areas between Brown St and Deerpointe Subdivision making for a lot less brush hitting cars and people.

Rick Westphal, who is a new member since September, has done a remarkable job at Sutton Rd area. He has cut most quadrants back 250' or more allowing for much better vision for both train crews and motorists on Sutton Rd. It also makes the area look nice along with allowing an easy path to the signal box. He will keep working on the area cutting back more brush and also finish getting the block joints painted on each side for ease of maintenance and so train crews know exactly where the signals will get tripped.

These members have put in many hours but have had very few actual days to work, proving you don't have to come out a bunch of times to make a difference, just COME OUT!!

From the President *Continued from Page 2*

Each challenge to the ballot envelopes and those not in envelopes is being written down in a book for the Election Inspector's review. There have been about 35 established challenges. Several of these have already been decided one way or the other by the Election Inspector and those have been noted and acknowledged by each group.

The Election Inspector will review the book and make rulings on the challenges (many of them are very similar) and will result in either the ballots being counted or not. After this process, to certify the election list, those ballots that are ruled eligible to be counted will be opened and sorted and counted. The Election Inspector must prepare a written report to the court. Supporting data has been given to him on some matters under his review and he must review to include such in his report. After this report is received by both sides and the Lenawee Court, it too can be challenged via court action, i.e. a lawsuit.

Presumably, and I say this because there is no precedent in Michigan law, the court could order the new board members seated after acceptance of the report and ballots are counted. Either side could then institute a lawsuit that challenges the Election Report and then the lawsuit would go through the court processes. Since a lawsuit has been talked about by the Tecumseh Group in the meetings, and by other members not in the meetings, we are taking all steps necessary to preserve the information and ballot envelopes (and the actual ballots) while trying our best to preserve the right of SMRS members to a secret ballot.

Meanwhile, the current Board of Directors remains in place and will continue to maintain the operations of the Society during this election process. That means we will continue to have board meetings on the 2nd Saturday of each month, usually starting at 7:00 p.m. in the Clinton meeting room. Members are encouraged to attend, and those who wish to serve on committees will be allowed to serve, or appointed if necessary. Long term plans and any negotiated items are subject to being tabled for the new board's review and action; however, actions that involve scheduling operations, training sessions, etc. "continues to maintain the operations" of the museum.

Your Board of Directors is committed to the completion of the Election Process and the seating of the elected board members. We had no knowledge or foresight that this process with an Election Inspector would be as time consuming or costly. And, we had no choice in the matter because The Tecumseh Group took legal action to appoint an Election Inspector in the Lenawee Court system. Please continue to support your railroad museum through your involvement in work groups, training sessions, crew assignments, etc. Get involved by putting together a work group to cut brush or clean up the yard or help out on a repair project, a remodeling project, or a restoration project. If you have an idea to work on something, come to the board meeting and let your Board Members become aware of what you'd like to see or what you'd like to do for SMRS. As SMRS has done in the past, some planning sessions will be held during February and March so members have opportunities to participate in their railroad museum's activities.

Of course, your donations (tax deductible!) are sincerely appreciated also and you can designate where you'd like them to be used. Many companies also have matching donation forms that can be submitted and double your donation to SMRS. As always, donation letters will be provided for your income tax purposes. And those of you in the United States, don't forget that your volunteer mileage may be deductible if you use Schedule A charitable deductions on your income tax. So there's a real good reason to come out to SMRS and help your museum!

I know you are anxious to have this election behind us so that we can all move forward. Please don't let this delay hold you back from your involvement with the Society.

We are doing our utmost to make sure SMRS continues to preserve the history of Lenawee's railroad system and provide the excursion and tourist trains along the line, but we still need you, our members, to make it all happen. Come out and help plan next year's train schedule. Get a work group and work on an area of the track where trees need trimming

or cutting. Plan a barbeque to warm up afterwards. You can make it fun along with a little work at SMRS.

I hope you all had a happy holiday season. Here is to a Prosperous New Year.

Cynthia Given, President

The Takeover So Far

By Robert MacDowell

If you are reading this, you are probably aware that a group of people is trying to take over the Southern Michigan Railroad Society. For some of you, it was a significant reason that you became a member. Let's start with the back-story.

A brewing storm

Railway Express issue 11 reported in 1989 that a gravel pit/housing development was proposed south of Staib Road. "Clinton Tecumseh Enterprises" or CTE would mine gravel, landscape to include artificial lakes, and then build luxury lakeside homes. This project was to include land on both sides of SMRS track. In 2003, CTE attempted to purchase that trackage. Rumor has it that a "mother lode" of gravel exists under the track.

Railway Express issue 71 (August 2001) reported that attorney Charles Gross, chairman of the River Raisin Greenways Project, had talked to SMRS about their plan for a "rails to trails" bike path between Tecumseh and Manchester. It also reported that Charles Gross had thrown his name into nomination for the Board of Directors. He did not do well. Members campaigned against him, fearing his agenda was to promote the rail-trail. But he was also a first-time, unknown member running against three well known longtime volunteers - George Cowdrey, Chuck Fannin and Ernie Jeschke. It is difficult to say why he lost.

In 2008, attorney Charles Gross, representing A.J. Brown, sued SMRS, aiming to seize SMRS land. ("Railroad fights for existence", Adrian Telegram, May 24, 2008). They claimed SMRS was built on an easement, which expired when the railroad was abandoned in 1982. A proper title search revealed SMRS does indeed own its land. As part of the settlement, SMRS gave Brown a residential easement. This is unusual, since SMRS has continued Conrail's practice of not issuing easements, but crossing licenses instead. Indeed, the \$100 per year SMRS charges for a residential crossing license is exactly the same price Conrail charged in 1982. This writer believes SMRS has never refused or terminated a crossing license, and most are executed without help from a lawyer.

Almost 400 new memberships

Every nonprofit organization has a governing set of rules called "By-laws". These combine with state law to determine how the nonprofit is governed. SMRS by-laws define it as a member-governed organization, votes are done by mail, and votes are required to sell assets. One would have to be a serious "by-laws geek" to know that members must join by August 31 to vote in the November 2009 election.

About August 20, SMRS received a packet containing a proposed complete replacement by-laws. It would significantly change how SMRS was governed. Since it had come from out of the blue, it was not apparent who would vote for it. That question was answered on August 28, when SMRS received another packet, via process server. It contained 149 membership applications.

They appeared to be employees, friend and family of Charles Gross, A.J. Brown, Michigan Pallet, and CTE. Most had a mailing address covered with a sticker, giving a single address: 105 Brown Street, office of Charles Gross. Most memberships were paid for by Charles Gross and A.J. Brown. These memberships raised many questions. Gift memberships are OK, but by providing Mr. Gross's address, these appeared to be intended to deliver to Mr. Gross the member's benefits and

rights, including voting rights. Is vote-buying permitted in a non-profit? (there is no case law for nonprofits, but in for-profit companies, it is generally frowned upon by the courts.) What would be his authority for voting their vote - presumably a proxy? Are proxies permitted in nonprofits and at SMRS? Are proxies permitted in a mail-in election?

All these questions could be resolved in court, but it would time, legal action and considerable cost. A far cheaper way would be to get more members and win the 2009 election on the numbers. Could this be done in three days? Chances are, you already know that answer. Yes, the SMRS volunteers gathered 216 new memberships.

Unaware of the 216 members, the takeover group went to the press and confirmed that yes, indeed, it was a takeover. (Tecumseh Herald, Sept. 3; Adrian Telegram, Sept. 6.) They claimed 180 members. (this included 26 more from Hardwoods of Michigan, which missed the August 31 deadline, and were not stickered.) But SMRS now had over 550 members total.

Election Inspector

Charles Gross filed a lawsuit in Lenawee probate court on behalf of Tim Goligoski (who happens to run CTE Sand and Gravel). They demanded an election inspector, citing the large number of new members joining in late August. SMRS chose to select an inspector rather than object to the inspection, as state law did permit inspectors. This was accepted. It was thought, a neutral inspector would help in the likely event the election went to court.

SMRS selected the inspector - attorney Michael Brooks of Tecumseh. Mr. Brooks initially offered to do the inspection for free, and assured the court that there would be an election on November 14. However, he became aware that the takeover group was planning a very large number of objections to almost every SMRS member. If the 216 were rejected and the 149 accepted, they could win. Therefore SMRS had no choice but to object to the 149. Unfortunately this made the election inspection much more complicated. Brooks decided it would be impossible to conduct the inspection at the meeting on November 14, and the meeting was adjourned (deferred). Also, someone needed to pay for his services, and that would be SMRS.

Brooks reconvened Sunday November 15 at his office. He invited a small group - Cynthia Given (SMRS president), Ernie Jeschke (SMRS Treasurer), Dana Dever (SMRS attorney), Charles Gross, Tim Goligoski, and Mark Dobronski (of the Adrian and Blissfield Rail Road). Other members were sent away.

The first step is to certify each ballot. You probably know SMRS elections involve mailing copy-resistant ballot sheets in a sealed, signed envelope. The takeover ballots were quite different - indeed they did use proxies, which were stapled to photocopies of the ballot sheets, loose, not in signed envelopes.

The format required by Mr. Brooks required each objection to be repeated for each ballot. Mr. Brooks expected about 2000 repeated objections of about 23 types (Adrian Telegram, Dec. 25). The takeover group's ballots were counted first, and took until mid-December. Since the takeover group was not objecting to their own ballots, this meant SMRS had lodged most objections so far.

Throughout the certification process, the takeover group has pressed the SMRS to "settle" the election. Their proposal has included giving them two board seats and remove Cynthia Given (who has termed out, and only remains in power because they have delayed the election).

Mr. Brooks suggested in the article that he might not have an election result by Valentines Day, three 3 months after the election was supposed to occur. However at this writing, Cynthia Given estimates that the certification process is about 3/4 done. At that point, the membership meeting will presumably reconvene, legitimate ballot envelopes will be opened and votes will be tallied. It is not known whether additional delays will arise in the counting phase, or whether there will be additional legal challenges to the outcome.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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**Board Meetings 2nd Saturday of each month EXCEPT
October**

7pm in the meeting room OPEN to ALL members

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