

# Achievement Program

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## Varney Dockside sparked lifelong hobby *Charles M. Spangler earns MMR #271*

Charlie Spangler was born in Chicago, Ill., in 1937, however his parents moved to Houston, Texas, three months later. He lived in the Houston area until he and his wife moved to Fredericksburg, Texas, in 1982. There they ran a small cattle ranch until 1997, when they decided to retire and spend more time with their real loves, computers and model railroading.

Yes, like many of us, his father gave him a Lionel trainset for Christmas at the tender age of three. Charlie feels that he was really too young to get the model railroading bug at that time, but his real interest began in 1947 when his father gave him an HO-scale Varney Dockside kit. That little Dockside has now been superdetailed and plays an important part in his model railroading.

From that time on his interests in model railroading grew and has continued to do so ever since. Through the years his model railroading has been interrupted from time to time by high school football, girls, college and the US Army. During this time, he built three layouts. It wasn't until he got married that his model railroading really activity really thrived. His wife felt that it was a fantastic hobby and gave him a lot of support and encouragement. They have a trade-off, he supports and encourages her work with computers and in turn she supports his hobby.

When they restored their 1850s ranch house, a 20' x 40' addition was included to house his layout, the DawCha Southern. The railroad was about 80 percent complete when they decided to sell the ranch. The DawCha Southern was a connecting railroad set in the Hill Country of Central Texas during the late '40s. It had connections with the Santa Fe, Southern Pacific and the Katy. The main products handled were cattle, farm produce, grain, farm machinery and all other products needed to sustain a farm and ranch community. Motive power was steam with a few first generation diesels.

The DawCha Southern is now a Fallen Flag, however, in the next few months she should be restored when their new home and train room are completed.

Charlie is a life member of the NMRA and of the Lone Star Region. He has held the office of Regional Membership Chairman for the LSR and he is presently Director of Division 6. He was a member of the Kerr County Model Railroad Club and he is now active in the San Antonio Model Railroad Association, Inc., The Fredericksburg Model Railroad Club and the Rio Grande Valley Rails model railroad club. Charlie and his wife also host an Internet site home page for Division 6 which can be reached through the LSR home page.

Charlie's first venture into the AP came when he entered a model of a logging diesel in the LSR model contest in 1990. He won third place, however, he received enough points to earn a Merit Award. This started the process of earning AP certificates and after a few years and encouragement for his wife he started to accumulate the certificates he needed for his MMR. He holds certificates for Motive Power, Cars, Structures, Civil and Electrical Engineer, Scenery and Association Volunteer.

In Charlie's own words: "I have already designed the new DawCha Southern. It is going to be completely different from what I have had in the past. And, with the help of our builder and lighting designer, the new DawCha Southern should be a sight to behold."

