

MADERA Tribune

Book Review: New book offers nostalgic look at Lionel

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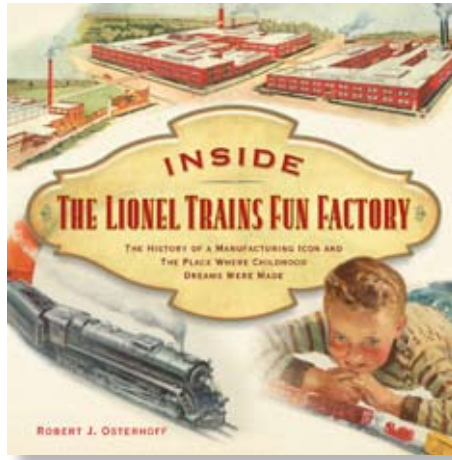
By The Madera Tribune - Fred G. Nix

While most people will recognize the name Lionel and associate it with the fun of today or the fun of yesteryear, most are not aware of the big business behind the toy trains that we all know and love. At one time Lionel was one of the largest toy companies in the world, a position rivaling Nintendo today.

The book "Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory" by Robert J. Osterhoff, is subtitled "The History Of A Manufacturing Icon And The Place Where Childhood Dreams Were Made." The book explores the life and times of one of the true bastions of capitalism, taking the reader through its rise, fall and rise again to a name recognized worldwide.

The book discusses the Lionel factories, the opportunities for diversification provided by the people of Lionel, their inventiveness and the survival of Lionel toy trains.

Of particular interest to me is the chapter "In Defense Of America." The war years were a time when Lionel made toy trains of cardboard while devoting their resources almost entirely to defense production. While at work one day, a local civil defense representative came by to test the equipment stored at my place of employment - a radiation proof blanket and two Geiger counters. As I am a toy train enthusiast, you can imagine my interest when I saw the words Lionel Corp. and



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the familiar insignia on the Geiger counters.

Inside the Lionel Trains Fun Factory is an oversized, 10 inch by 10 inch, 248-page, hardback book filled with full color glossy photos. It is priced at \$34.95. A limited edition collectors' version sells for \$69.95.

I was very impressed with the quality and depth of this book and **wholeheartedly recommend it** to any one interested in big business in America or the fun of playing with Lionel Trains.

Due out this month, the book is available from Project Roar Publishing, P.O. Box 599, Winfield, IL 60190, call 630-653-ROAR, (7627) or e-mail info@projectroar.com

Inside The Lionel Trains Fun Factory: The History of a Manufacturing Icon and The Place Where Childhood Dreams Were Made by Robert J. Osterhoff. Available from Project Roar Publishing, P.O. Box 599, Winfield, IL 60190. To order, visit www.projectroar.com or call 630-653-ROAR (7627). 248 pages, 575+ color photos and images, Hardcover \$34.95 (ISBN 978-1-9336-0005-5), Publisher's Limited Edition Hardcover \$69.95 (ISBN 978-1-9336-0006-2). It is also available at your local book seller, hobby retailer, bn.com and Amazon.com.



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