



Space Station of Doom
at Brickworld Chicago 2018

KLUG

by Dave Sneijder

The Kenosha LEGO User Group had its genesis in the chance meeting of four LEGO builders at Brickworld Chicago 2010. Rich Leonowitz was waiting in line at the Northbrook LEGO Store to get the convention discount when he happened to notice the badges of the two people waiting in line in front of him, Jameson Gagnepain and his wife, Amy.

"You're from Kenosha, too?" Rich asked. "I met two other guys today who live there."

The next day Rich introduced Jameson to Chris Eyerly and John Wolfe. Because there was no club in Kenosha, it was decided at that meeting that the four of them would form the Kenosha LEGO User Group.

From the early days of KLUG, Trolley Town has been a focal point of the group's displays. During regular meetings, the four of them worked out

the standard for road design, sidewalk height and wiring for lights in the buildings. Many of the buildings in Trolley Town represent actual buildings in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Even the street cars which run on the streets of Trolley Town are based on actual trolley cars that ran in Kenosha.

It is also from Trolley Town that the club's motto of "Wretched Excess" developed. The tracks that the trolley cars originally ran on was 9V track. This track was used, not because the electric current was needed to power the train—it ran on batteries and still does—but rather just because they could. Also, there were a bunch of sand green colored bricks used in the landscaping, which was a rare colour in 2011 when Trolley Town made its first appearance. Again, the colour was used not because it served a purpose, but just because the group's members could.

From the appearance of Trolley Town until today, one of the greatest assets of KLUG is the diversity of our members, both in terms of demographics and in what they build. Young and old, men and women, Star Wars, Harry Potter, architecture and vehicles. The people of KLUG are

a diverse group, and we think that makes us all the stronger.

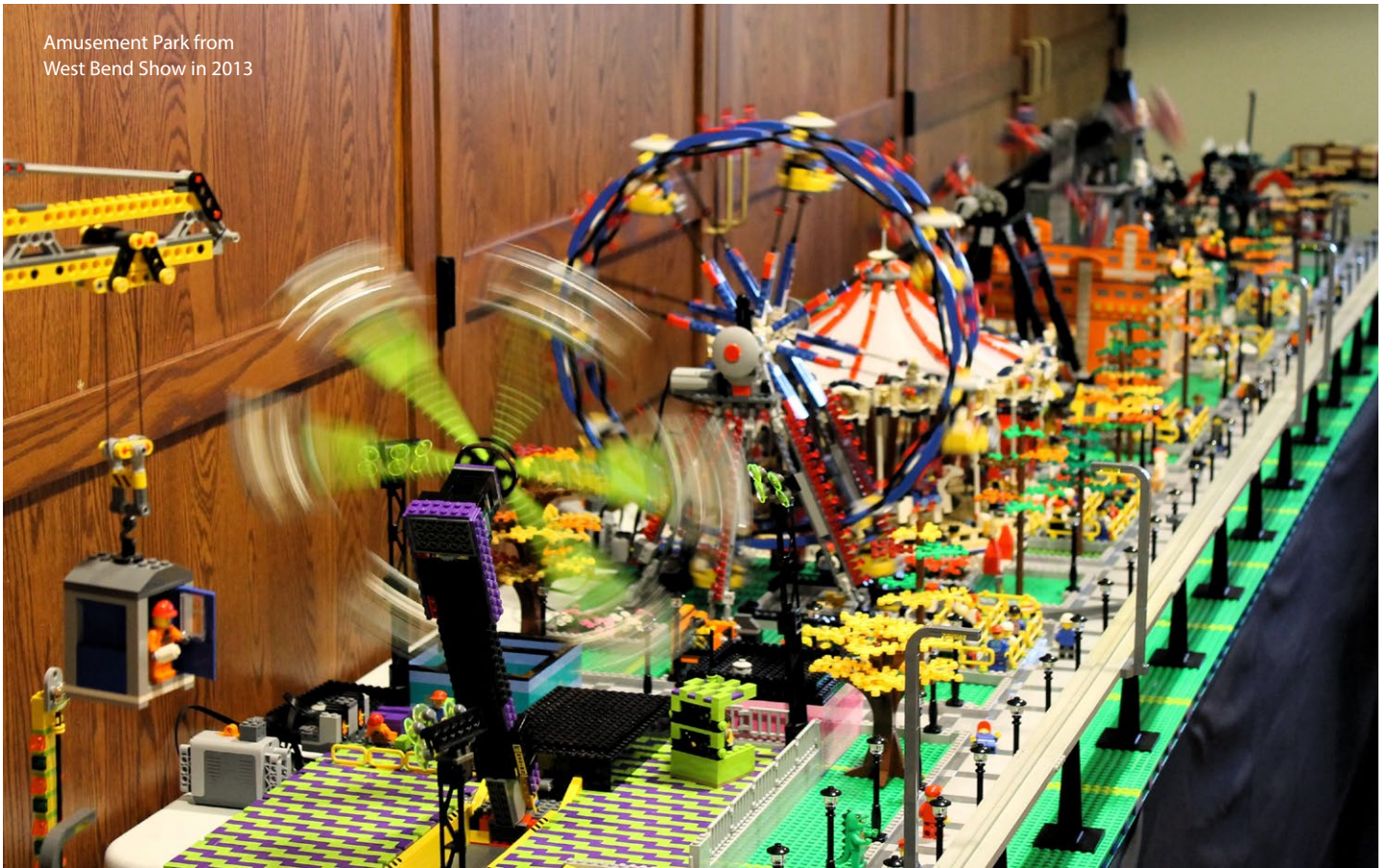
Besides Trolley Town, we also have several other large collaborative displays. There is the Space Station of Doom, which is a whimsical take on the Death Star from Star Wars. We also have a large amusement park display.

In its current form, KLUG has 50 active members. Most of KLUG's membership lives in southeastern Wisconsin and the northern suburbs of Chicago. However, there are members in Milwaukee and as far north as Green Bay, where KLUG and WisLUG cooperate in supporting FoxLUG.

During a "normal" year, we would do 8-10 public shows. Many of our events are at venues where we have developed a good relationship with the venue operators, such that they look forward to our return year after year.

Of course, 2020 was anything but a normal year. It put many of our regular activities on hold. During the summer, we were able to hold one in-person meeting for those who felt comfortable meeting in person. However, most of our meetings have taken place virtually.

Amusement Park from
West Bend Show in 2013



KLUG's Founding Members: John Wolfe, Jameson Gagnepain, Chris Eyerly and Rich Leonowitz

Trolley Town at Brickworld Fort Worth 2011

