



# THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 14. ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER 2012



Member since June 1988

**NEXT MEETING**  
Nov. 15  
6:45 p.m.

**NEXT MONTH**  
**Deadline for**  
**Dec. Issue**  
November 24, 2012

**MEMBERSHIP**  
117

### ATTENDANCE PRIZE

Three names were drawn and Paul Lodge was present to win.

Will your name be drawn on **Nov. 15**? You have to be present to win!

### **BOTTLES FOR BASICS**

- ◆ LAST YEAR \$344.11
- ◆ YEAR TO DATE: \$153.10
- ◆ THIS MONTH: \$23.25
- ◆ \$23.25

## Christmas Decorations by Paul Lodge

### CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS FOR CLUBHOUSE

On Monday and Tuesday, November 12 and 13 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., club members are invited to help decorate the clubhouse for our Christmas ExTRAINaganza. The club has collected a lot of supplies for this purpose and additional decorations are NOT needed. We can use your help in decorating about ten Christmas trees, hanging garlands, installing skirts to dress up the HO layout, setting up for craft activities, and cleaning the building.

Our ExTRAINaganza will start on



Saturday, November 17. The times and dates will coincide

with the Shriner's FEZtival of Trees.

## Turnout Classes BY Paul Lodge

Travis Johnson and Roger Plummer are going to lead classes in turnout rebuilding for DCC on November 10 and December 8 from 9 a.m. to noon. Participants will learn how to set up a turnout for DCC or make a turnout work better in DC. Members are encouraged either to bring personal turnouts on which to work or to convert to DCC one of the club turnouts. If you bring

your own, you can then take it home. If you use one of the club's turnouts, the converted turnout will be used on the club layout.

In order to make the experience more personal, it is suggested that participants bring the following tools if you have them: soldering iron, flux, and solder; miter box and saw, rail nippers, hobby knife with #11

blade, and rail joiners.

Classes for converting turnouts to DCC will be offered again after the new year starts.

This is a great opportunity for club members to upgrade their skills and improve the operations of the club's layouts or their personal layouts.

Our club facility has been used recently for non-club activities. On October 21, a family rented the club for a "Railroad Birthday Party." About a dozen children and adults enjoyed the birthday party with balloons and games.

## Clubhouse Active by Paul Lodge

Our club facility has been used recently for non-club activities. On October 21, a family rented the club for a "Railroad Birthday Party." About a dozen children and adults enjoyed the birthday party with balloons and games.

On Saturday, October 13, Operation Lifesaver held its annual meeting at the clubhouse and honored the club with an award for its outstanding contributions to railroad safety. Ten club members are currently Operation Lifesaver volunteers are authorized to who give railroad safety presentations to various groups.

About twenty-five volunteer income tax preparers for AARP Tax Aide program held a successful day-long training session at the club on Monday, October 22.

On Thursday, October 4, a special visit by Jeff, a mentally impaired client, came to visit the club with two caregivers from Bangor. Jeff had come to the club's EX-TRAINaganza and Hobo Holiday and wanted to share his experience with others. He is very proud of the locomotive he made from Legos and tried unsuccessfully to run it on the G-gauge track.

On Saturday, October 6, visually impaired people were invited to visit the club, but none came. Representatives of the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad had been contacted and planned to allow a tour their engine facility on Lewiston Junction Road in Auburn. Even though we did not go on

October 6, we can make arrangements as a club to tour the facility at a later time.

On Saturday, October 13, The Great Falls Model Railroad Club was recognized for its "many years of dedication to railroad safety education through its members and club activities."

## Local Club Honored by Paul Lodge

On Saturday, October 13, The Great Falls Model Railroad Club was recognized for its "many years of dedication to railroad safety education through its members and club activities." Maine Operation Lifesaver, at its annual awards meeting in Auburn, presented the plaque to club president, Edward Leslie. Great Falls Model Railroad Club members have made hundreds of railroad safety presentation throughout this region of Maine. Operation Lifesaver is an international organization dedicated to informing the public about the dangers at railroad crossings and the

potential dangers of trespassing on 160,000 miles of private railroad property throughout the country.

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club has ten Operation Lifesaver authorized volunteers who are available to give presentations to civic groups, schools, automobile and truck driver education programs, first responders (including fire, police, EMTs) and any companies which work near railroad property (such as electricity, cable, and telephone). The presentations are free and can be arranged by calling Fred Hirsch, Maine Operation Lifesaver Director at 207-945-6878.

The Maine Operation Lifesaver presenters who are members of The Great Falls Model Railroad

Club are Edward Leslie, Tom Coulombe, Jay Calnan, Stephen Martelli, Dick Clark, David Gilchrist, Phil Clough, Maurice Fortin, Travis Johnson, and Paul Lodge.

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club is designated as a non-profit 501c(3) Educational Foundation. Educating the public about railroad safety is one of the club's fundamental missions.

In 2011, there were 266 highway-rail grade crossing fatalities in the United States. Even more disturbing is that there were 428 pedestrian trespass deaths. Rails and recreation do NOT mix.

# Meet the members By Maurice Fortin

## TOM COULOMBE

Members of GFMRRRC are all familiar with Tom Coulombe, who is our Treasurer and Station Master. As our Treasurer he tells us at every monthly meeting about our income, expenses, and budget. As Station Master he informs us of what has been done and what needs to be done at the club house. Much of this work he does himself if he can. Besides his current positions as Treasurer and Station Master, he served as Secretary and had one two-year term as President and a one-year term as secretary.

Tom is married to Carmen and they have one son, Jacob. Tom and Carmen volunteer for many of the club activities. Their son was involved in model railroading, but his inter-

est faded after he earned his Eagle Scout. Tom is retired, having worked for the state of Maine as a Fiscal Manager for the Department of Education, managing federal and state funds for Special Education.

He has been involved in model railroading and scouting for many years. He read an ad in *Model Railroader* magazine in 1997 that said the Boy Scouts of America were looking for volunteers to help with the Model Railroading Merit Badge at the National Jamboree. He applied and was accepted. He is now preparing for the Jamboree in 2013 in West Virginia, which will be his fifth Boy Scout Jamboree.

Tom enjoys model railroading at home. His HO layout features the Great Northern Railroad and is approximately 15 feet by 40 feet. The layout is all DCC, and he has operating sessions every other Monday. He also enjoys being the Dispatcher at the oper-

ating sessions held at the club. With several other club members, he is currently designing and setting up the N scale layout.



# Photo Essay by Terry King



The photos on the left are of the layout. Above Tom Coulombe is preparing the ground for the installation of the base for our speeder. On the right the "G" gang is starting scenery.



Decorating the clubhouse for Christmas Ex-TRAINaganza will take place during the days of Monday and Tuesday, November 12 and 13. All the decorations will be at the club and members are invited to come, get creative, and have fun.

## October Minutes by Paul Lodge

Before the meeting started, club members were treated to a slide presentation made by Ed Leslie showing pictures of club activities since the last meeting. The evening's video was a follow-up to Ed's slide show. Dick Clark had made a 30-minute video of the club's visit to the Hartmann's Railroad Museum outside North Conway, New Hampshire.

At the start of the meeting, President Ed Leslie presented to the club the plaque received on October 13 from Operation Lifesaver, honoring the club for its outstanding contribution to railroad safety. Nancy Weeks was given a visor and special apron made by Brenda Leslie as a thank you from the club for her help with the summer picnic and at the club's Hobo Café.

President Leslie opened the meeting and asked for the Secretary's Report. A motion was made, and accepted, to approve the report as published in the newsletter.

Tom Coulombe gave the Treasurer's Report, which was approved as given.

The Station Master's Report was given by Tom Coulombe. He reported that the light over the entrance ramp on the outside corner of the building has been fixed. The club house was rented for a birthday party earlier in October. The Amherst Railroad Society is offering grants from the proceeds of its West Springfield show. The club will apply for a grant to replace the boiler in the furnace so that it can be converted to natural gas. Tom is still waiting for quotes on the furnace replacement project. On Saturday, October 20, the speeder display will be put into place. The hole has been dug, field stones for the pedestal have

been delivered, and crushed stone will be purchased for the speeder display. This project should be completed before the next meeting. Tom also noted that Terry King is usually in the building from 9 to noon on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday for anyone who wants to work on the layouts.

As the Library/Archive director, Terry King reported that a large donation from club member Lee Akeley will be added to the library, with some books being sold to help support library activities.

Brenda Leslie, Activities Director, reminded members of the Basswood class on Saturday, October 20, and the Slide and Dine in the evening. The fund-raising supper will cost \$5 each. At the next meeting on September 20, there will be a "Pie Auction" to help raise funds for the club. After the Auburn Middle School Train Show on November 3, club members are encouraged to relax and eat as a group at Governor's Restaurant in Lewiston.

President Leslie reported that he has appointed Jerry Johnston to create a Fund-Raising Committee. Club members were asked to see Jerry in order to become part of the committee to help with this effort.

Decorating the clubhouse for Christmas ExTRAINaganza will take place during the days of Monday and Tuesday, November 12 and 13. All the decorations will be at the club and members are invited to come, get creative, and have fun.

Tom Coulombe reported that

the tables for the November 3 train show will arrive at the Auburn Middle School at 4 p.m. on Friday, November 2. Club members were asked to come and help unload (and possibly set up) tables for the dealers. On Saturday, the day of the show, members can arrive at 6 a.m. to finish setting up tables and the modular layout. Tom asked for volunteers to help sell items at the show. We need volunteers to watch the doors, sell tickets, help with the children's play area, and be available for other duties as they come up.

Layout Reports: Terry King reported that people working on the HO layout are making progress with scenery, wiring, and bridge building. Ken Nettleship noted that the G-gauge logging line is operational and the trestles are in place. The group plans to scenic the area which people see as they come into the building.

Tom Coulombe reported that the paving crew has been out on the N-scale layout and an industrial area has been developed.

Travis Johnson was scheduled to present a clinic on "What's on Your Workbench?" Because he had to work, his presentation will be scheduled for a later date.

John Visco talked about "Thinking Out of the Boxcar." John explained how he built a GE U-Boat by cutting down another locomotive shell. John followed up his display with a slide presentation showing pictures from the Lewiston Lower branch beside the Bates Mill buildings. Some of the slides showed the track plans as they existed originally and compared them to track plans from the 1800's. These pictures have been used as the basis for creating the canal and

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Minutes Continued

track arrangements on the HO layout peninsula.

Dick Clark displayed a transcribing machine which can be used with a foot pedal to add sound to different locations on the layout: farm animals, workshops, people talking, etc. Several of these machines are available and can be

used on any of the club's layouts.

Bryce Weeks will present "What's on Your Workbench" at the November meeting.

At the end of the meeting, the Attendance Prize was drawn and Paul Lodge was there to select one of the hats. The 50/50 Raffle was won by David Gilchrist.



# Hartmann's Museum Trip by Paul Lodge

On Saturday, September 29, nine club members traveled to the Hartmann Railroad Museum in Intervale, New Hampshire, four miles north of North Conway. They were greeted by Roger Hartmann, who gave a brief history of the development of the museum, outdoor railroad, hobby shop, and cafeteria. He and his wife Nelly have spent about twenty years traveling around the world collecting old and new railroad supplies for the museum.

Club members went through the Brass Caboose Hobby Shop, which sells hobby supplies for many hobbies including boats, planes, dollhouse, and trains. There are railroad supplies for all gauges from G to Z scales in Marklin, Lionel, and other well-known brands.

They also toured the railroad museum, which is housed in a separate building. It has a large number of static displays and operating layouts in different gauges. Even "Thomas the Tank Engine" runs on a layout inside the building.

At noontime, the Hartmann's provided a Swedish luncheon in their cafeteria. The meal consisted of roast pork and a special Swedish of spaetzle, a pasta-type dish sautéed in oil before serving.

Machinist, Roger Caron of Wales, Maine, had built for his home use an outdoor ride-on railroad with buildings, bridges, locomotives, and cars for passengers to ride on. Several years ago Roger Hartmann purchased the entire railroad and moved it to his museum in Intervale. Club members were able to ride the train around the museum grounds.

The following club members attended the event: Ed and Brenda Leslie, Dick Rubin, Jerry Johnston, Ed Webb, Stephen Mar-

telli, Rick and Terry James, and Dick Clark.



These pictures were taken by Dick Clark. On the left are photos of the Adult Education. Above are photos of the layout.



## THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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### An Educational Foundation

#### MEETING POSTPONEMENTS

If severe weather threatens on a meeting night, Tom Coulombe will notify local television stations that the meeting will be postponed until the following week. This would make it the fourth Thursday of the month instead of the third. Club members who receive the newsletter via e-mail will be notified by e-mail about the postponement.

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### THE SIGNAL

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## Upcoming Events



**November 10,** Turnout renovation classes to make turnouts work with DCC. 9:00 to Noon.

**November 15,** Membership Meeting and Pie Auction. 6:45 p.m.

**November 17,** Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club Train Show in Brewer 10:00—3:30

**November 17-19 & 23-24,**  
ExTRAINaganza.

**December 6, 7 & 8** Maine State Museum

**December 10,** Turnout class see Nov. 10 for details.

**January 26—27, 2013** Springfield Show

**September 7-10, 2016,** 36th Na-

tional Narrow Gauge Convention at Augusta, Me.



Riverbed waiting for the fall rains.

Photo by Terry King