

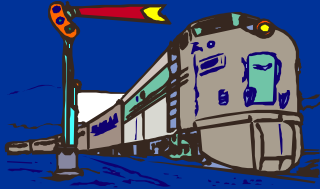


Members since June 1988

The Signal



February Edition
2018



Signal indicates **STOP AT OUR NEXT MEETING**
February 15 2018 6:30!

Clinic: Computer Sites run HO trains after meeting!

Involve friends & relatives

Meetings demonstrate how Hobbies impart the trades
Fabrication—Finishing—Electricity
Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn
-- Benjamin Franklin

Have a story you want to share?

Share your account at the meeting!
Or publish it in our newsletter!
Let us know by February 25, 2018
Email secretary Paul Lodge
See back page for contact info . . .

Do you want to win Attendance & 50/50 prizes?

Don't let somebody else score a brass locomotive with the cash from the winning prize!
You must be present to win!

DONATIONS . . .

Bottles for Basics (B4B)
Total Last Year \$ 712.00
YTD \$479.00
Last month: \$ 27.45
Used Printer Cartridges
Total Last Year \$ 350
YTD: \$ 105.00
Last month: \$ 0.00

MODEL RAILROAD AND DOLLHOUSE SHOW IN AUGUSTA

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club will take part in the annual Model Railroad and Dollhouse Show at the Augusta Armory on Saturday, February 17, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The show is sponsored by the Whitefield Lions Club. Our club members can get into the building at 7 a.m. to begin setting up the excess inventory tables and the modular layout.



This popular show encourages cross-hobby sharing between model trains and model dollhouses. There are a variety of items used in modeling dollhouses which can be used in model railroading scenes. Many dollhouse enthusiasts get ideas from us about three-dimensional landscaping and tree building which they can use in their hobby.

Club members will be at the Augusta Armory at 7 a.m. to set up modules and sales tables for the show. If you would like to include your module in the club's modular layout, it needs to be at the Augusta Armory by 8 a.m. We can use help setting up the layout, operating the layout, taking down the layout at 3 p.m., and with various other projects throughout the day.

Come, enjoy the show, and help with the day's activities



KENT WATERSON CREATING DIORAMA

At the monthly Model Railroaders Forum meeting of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club on January 25, Kent Waterson displayed the 16" x 20" dock structure which is part of a diorama he is creating.



His goal is to replicate the photo of a Japanese Mitsubishi Zero that was being unloaded at a dock in Butch Harbor, Alaska. The plane, which had crashed on Akutan Island, was the first Japanese Zero recovered basically intact by American forces during World War II.



Kent has scratch-built the dock from basswood. Also to be included in the diorama are components of a kit-bashed Lorain M2 Moto-Crane with a scratch-built cab, Sheepscot Scale Products crane boom, frame from Tamiya 6 by 6 Airfield Fuel Truck, and crane winch from Walthers 25-ton crane kit.

By Paul Lodge





Member
#076805 00
Since 1988

Come share
your projects & tools
at our
Modeler's Forum



**A SECOND SURPLUS INVENTORY SALE
SLATED FOR MAY 19**

Several people have suggested having a second Surplus Inventory Sale at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club in the spring. It has also been suggested that the club offer clinics.

At the club meeting on January 18, a motion was made to have a combined Surplus Inventory Sale and Clinic Day on Saturday, May 19.

This will replace the Hobo Holiday which has usually been held on the third Saturday of May.

WINTER WEATHER

If severe weather threatens on a meeting night, the meeting will be postponed until the following Thursday night. If you have email, you will receive an email message about the postponement. We will also notify the following TV stations: WCSH, WGME, and WMTW.

After each snowstorm, the club parking lot will be cleared and cleaned as soon as possible. Tire tracks pack down the snow and make the work more difficult. Please help us keep the railroad club parking lot empty of cars until it is empty of snow.

**BOTTLE REDEMPTION
VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

Bottles for Basics fund-raising has earned over \$500 for the club during each of the past four years and it is an important fund-raising project.

Thank you for supporting the club by bringing in your returnable bottles and cans.

We are again asking for your help. We need someone who is willing to collect the bottles from the club once or twice a month and take them to the redemption center.

Please contact any of the Executive Committee members if you are interested. Their contact information is on the last page of the newsletter.

Please see Thunder McBride, Owen Buck, or Ed Webb at any of our meetings!

**GFMRRC events
Don't miss next Surplus Sale!**



**HO TO HOLD STEAM SESSION
By Darin Long**

The HO Operating Session on February 24 will use steam power with early diesel yard power. Diesels from the 1930's or 40's will be appropriate. Bring your steamers or maybe a boxcab or borrow one from a fellow club member. We will have extra power for those who don't have dcc steam engines.

AMHERST MODEL RR SHOW in SPRINGFIELD, MA

CLINIC AT JANUARY CLUB MEETING XTrkCAD



Every year late in January or early in February, the Amherst Railway Society holds its Railroad Hobby Show at the Eastern States Exposition Fairgrounds (The home of The Big E) in West Springfield, Massachusetts. More than 22,500 railfans and public attended the Show each of the past five years.

This year, the show was held on Saturday January 27th & Sunday 28th. The New England LEGO Users Group was there displaying their amazing Lego train/city layout, and I traveled up to see it and experience the show.

The "BIG" Show

For years I've been hearing about the Amherst show. I've heard it's the biggest train show around and that any train fan/model railroader has to make the trip to see it at least once. They are right. This show is huge, with just over 400,000 square feet of show space, or roughly 9 acres of trains! This year was the show's 50th Anniversary and a record breaking 60+ operating train layouts in all shapes, scales, and sizes helped celebrate. And thanks to the folks at Boothbay and Edaville this year the show had a full size (2-ft gauge), live operating steam locomotive on the show grounds, rolling up and down 100 feet of track.

Boothbay's locomotive, Edaville no.11 !

Until you've seen this show, it's hard to grasp how big it really is. It takes over four buildings of the Eastern States Exposition. Nearly 9 acres of show space crammed with operating train layouts, model railroad manufacturers, vendors, railroad preservation groups, and any thing train related you can probably think of. If you're looking for it, there is a good chance you'll find it here.

The show itself is impossible to cover in just one day. You really need both days to take it all in and uncover all the neat stuff there is to see. The verity of the train layouts on display is amazing, every thing from Z scale to G gauge and above is there. The quality of the modeling on many of them is inspiring. You'll come home with more new ideas for building than you can hope to be able to complete in a year.

Over 30 train layouts on display at the show.

If you are looking to buy model trains, railroad books/magazines/DVDs, or railroad memorabilia, this is the show for you. If you walk away at the end of the weekend and haven't purchased some treasure, you can't be a train fan. Model trains in every scale, old and new, layout building supplies, how to resources, it's all there. Bring plenty of

money, you'll find something you just have to take home.

Two of the 50th Anniversary commemorative HO scale rail cars followed me home from the show.

NELUG's LEGO train Layout

The New England LEGO Users Group has displayed their LEGO train layout at the Amherst show for the past several years, and were back again this year in Mallary building. NELUG's layout featured multiple levels, several loops of running track with plenty of trains, a detailed town area and plenty of landscaping details.

NELUG's layout style is a bit different than PennLUG, which is my home club. NELUG doesn't have ballasted track like us, and they do not run the wider curves that we do in PennLUG. This made running some of my trains a little more challenging, but I was able to still get some running in through the weekend. However, just because NELUG may not be as train-centric as my own club doesn't mean their layout isn't still impressive. A lot of creativity, artistry, and healthy dose of humor was on display, and the members were very welcoming of me for the weekend. So a big thank you goes out to all of the members of NELUG for the wonderful layout, and the great friendship.

All shows must end, but there is always next year.

The 2018 Amherst train show did not disappoint. It was as big and as awesome as every one claims. It was a wonderland of model trains. And the members of NELUG were awesome to hang out with. This is a show I definitely want to return to again. In fact, I have the 2019 dates already marked in my calendar. Hopefully I can get a few of my fellow PennLUG train family and some of our BMR contributors to come out as well.

If you can make the trip, I highly recommend it. It's an awesome show.

Photos from this year's show can be found on Amherst club page.

By Cale Leiphart, in Brick Model Railroader, a LEGO fan Website, February 3, 2018, www.brickmodelrailroader.com

Computer Aided Design (CAD) has been available for decades and is useful to the designer for increasing productivity, quality of the design, communication through documentation, and reuse of designs through databases of previous work. Traditional CAD programs such as AutoCAD have their uses to the model railroader; but when it comes to track layout design, they can be quite cumbersome, especially to a non-experienced user. With the goal of providing the benefits of a CAD system without the complexity, XTrkCAD was developed specifically for model railroaders and it meets those goals.

XTrkCAD was originally a commercial product written for LINUX, produced by Sillup Technologies of Ottawa, Canada. Later it became open source (i.e., "free") and is now available for the Windows and MAC operating systems as well. The term "open source" means that the source code that lies behind the application is publicly available and can be copied, modified and used however the user would please. Since its release into the public domain, the application has continued to be maintained, fixing bugs and adding new features. The development is very much currently active; a new release is in testing and will be available soon.

With XTrkCAD, the user draws with sections of track. Straight and curved sections are flex-track; and components such as turnouts, crossings, and cross-overs are simply "dragged and dropped" from an extensive library of manufacturers' components. These libraries continue to be maintained as well, and new products are added regularly.

With XTrkCAD, a simple 4'x8' plywood sheet oval layout with a few turnouts and sidings can be created in minutes. The design can be printed out full scale (1:1) and used as a template for laying track to build your dream layout.

XTrkCAD is not limited to just track-work. The application can add multiple drawing layers, each with its own unique objects, such as benchwork, structures, scenery and wiring diagrams. On a completed layout, the user can actually "run trains" on the layout and evaluate how well the layout works for various operations and switching maneuvers. It's much easier to find these issues before track is laid than after. Online resources are available for help, and the user-supported community is very active in providing help for new users. The interface may be a bit challenging to a new user; but once you understand the basics, you are limited only by your imagination. It's free!

By Kent Waterson

**MEETING MINUTES OF
JANUARY 18, 2018**

FROM DESIGN TO COMPLETION

The January 18 meeting of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club began at 6:30 p.m. with the evening's TRAIN TIME show, which featured the Maine Eastern Train from Brunswick to Rockland.

A Power Point slide show of club activities in December and January was shown from 7:00 to 7:15 p.m.

President Whitethunder McBride opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Before the business meeting, Dexter Baum and Kent Waterson gave their presentations for the evening.

President McBride noted that there were new members at the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves. Tom McAvoy of Sidney, Dave Blue of Standish, and Chuck Hogan of Portland talked about their interest in the hobby and why they joined the club. After the new members introduced themselves, several other club members also introduced themselves and told about their model railroading interests.

President McBride asked for the Secretary's Report, and a motion was made and accepted to approve the Secretary's report as published in the Signal.

Owen Buck gave the Treasurer's Report and noted that we hope to have the mortgage of about \$6,000 paid off by the end of the year. He also noted that all dues are now due in January instead of the month in which a member joined. Having the club's fiscal year and dues correspond with the calendar year will simplify the bookkeeping. Anyone who has a question about dues should contact Owen Buck at 207-377-2872 or obuck61@hotmail.com Owen said that a small bulletin board will be set up on which the monthly Treasurer's Report will be placed so that club members can see details of the report.

Paul Lodge read the minutes from the Executive Committee meeting on January 11. There were items noted in the minutes on which club members needed to vote, and members discussed and voted on those items later in the meeting.

After the minutes were approved, President McBride opened the next portion of the meeting and reported that the furnace has been cleaned and the tractor has been fixed.

Because of his health, Chuck Bagley has resigned from the Bottles for Basics position, and a new volunteer needs to step up. The bottle drive usually nets about \$500 for the club each year so it is important to keep the program going.

President McBride reported that Ken Nettleship will not be able to continue as the Chairman of the G-Gauge Division because of his work schedule. Ken has been the Chairman for the past five years and has overseen many interesting changes to the layout and storage facilities. The G-Gauge Division will be meeting on January

At the January 18 meeting of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club, Dexter Baum displayed a pedestal he has created for his layout so that he can keep the top of the table 30 inches high and stabilize it in order to do the wiring and other work on the underside of the layout more easily. Dexter had previously shown the development stages of his special benchwork creation at the Modelers Forum in September and October and at the November 16 club meeting, including his drafting design and portions of the finished project.

His unique design not only makes it easier for him to work on his own layout but could also be helpful for model railroaders in wheelchairs or with other handicaps. Dexter noted that he has not been able to find any other source with suggestions for building benchwork for handicapped people interested in the hobby. His innovative design may become the subject of a magazine article as soon as he has completed the project.

At these meetings, Dexter has helped us to see the progression of his project from the design to the finished product.



By Paul Lodge

27 at 9 a.m. to choose a new chairman and discuss future plans for the layout.

Mike Meserve volunteered to report for the HO Division. It was noted that Jamie Robinson has been hand-laying turnouts for the HO layout. Jamie showed one of the turnouts that he had built at home and will set into the HO layout. Other work is also continuing on the HO layout. The HO group has checked the modules used for the shows. Some of the corners still need to be fixed for the February 17 show in Augusta. New member Tom McAvoy asked how members can help at the show. He was told to come between 7 and 8 a.m. and there will be set-up work to do. Members are encouraged to help with other projects for all or part of the day, including helping to take down the layouts, beginning at 3 p.m.

Because of limited income from the Hobo Holiday, a motion was made to not have the Hobo Holiday this year. After a brief discussion, it was voted not to have Hobo Holiday.

A motion was made to eliminate the Train Fest during the Balloon Festival. Most of those present voted to continue the Train Fest for this year.

A motion was made to have a combined Surplus Inventory Sale and Clinic Day on Saturday, May 19. Some members noted that the people doing the clinics might be interrupted by visitors wanting to buy surplus inventory if both activities were scheduled at the same time on the same day. The motion passed.

New member Tom McAvoy won the attendance prize and Owen Buck won the 50/50 raffle.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Check out our Facebook page at:

Great Falls Model Railroad Club

For up to date Reports on our Activities...

Visit our web page!

See Facebook page And Web Site for posted pictures of club events



G-GAUGE DIVISION CHANGING LEADERSHIP

Ken Nettleship has resigned as chairman of the G-Gauge Division of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club. His new job is requiring him to cut back on the time he can spend on the G-Gauge layout.

Ken has been the chairman for the past five years and has overseen many interesting changes to the layout and storage facilities, including the winter scene and the new trestles. His frequent email communications with the G-Gauge crew have been interesting and informative and have often been used as G-Gauge articles in the club newsletter.

While Peter Cole was on vacation in California, he was nominated (railroaded) as the new chairman at the G-Gauge meeting on January 27. Peter has been very active with the group and will do a good job. He will have a lot of help from the rest of the G-Gauge crew.

Progress is still being made on the layout; only the chairmanship has changed. The G-Gauge Division has recently rearranged some of the tracks on the layout to create a passing siding that will allow some limited set-out and pick-up operations.

By Paul Lodge

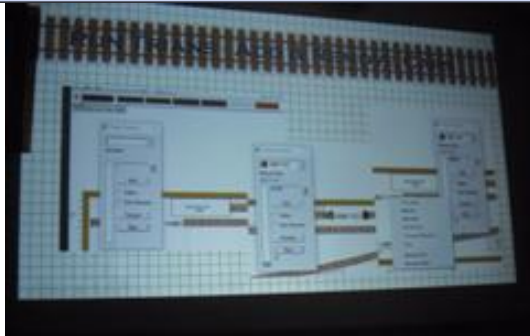
USING COMPUTERS FOR MODELING IDEAS

At the monthly meeting of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club on February 15, Darin Long will demonstrate how to find useful model railroading sites on the computer. There are hundreds of locations for learning how to do something as well as sites for sharing ideas. Darin plans to show how to get into some of his favorite sites and what knowledge can be gained from them.

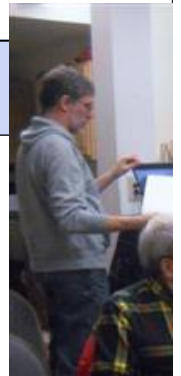
Club members are encouraged to ask questions and learn how to search for information on the computer. Most club members have access to computers, so learning to utilize them effectively in model railroading can be helpful to us in progressing with our hobby.

By Paul Lodge

XTrkCAD DEMONSTRATION A SUCCESS AT JANUARY MEETING



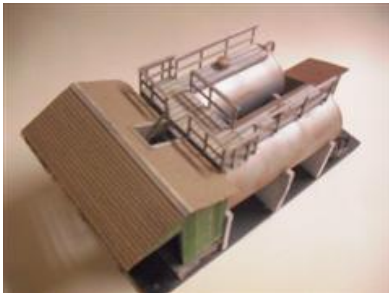
Kent Waterson gave an easy-to-understand presentation about XTrkCAD at the January 18 club meeting. He was able to show how individual components of this free online computer program can be used to design a layout and then run simulated trains on it. Kent also explained and showed how he used the program to practice switching moves to set out and pick up freight cars. His thirty-minute program was appreciated by all those in attendance.



By Paul Lodge



Bob Willard's oil storage project



Caption for photos of Bob Willard's oil storage project:

At the Modelers Forum on January 25, Bob Willard showed the group the progress on his current project. The oil storage tanks and

The Great Falls
Model Railroad Club
(GFMRRC)

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See us on Facebook!

Great Falls Model Railroad Club

An educational foundation



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The Signal

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GFMRRC
2018 Special Events

January 27 & 28

Eastern States Exposition, Springfield, MA – Amherst Railway Society 50th anniversary Railroad Hobby Show – for more details, see their website www.railroadhobbyshow.com

February 17

Whitefield Lions Club annual Model Railroad and Dollhouse Show, Augusta Armory, 10 to 3. Cost is \$5 for adults; free for children under 12; \$10 limit for families. We will need help setting up and supervising our layout.

We will need help setting up and supervising our layout. To include your module, bring it to Augusta Armory between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. (see article)

Special Notice:

For a prize-winning copyrighted photo of the WW&F Railway, featuring GFMRRC member Joe Fox, look in last month's Downeast magazine or go to their website: downeast.com/2018-reader-photo-contest

GFMRRC
Recurrent Activities

Please check web site or Facebook page

1st Thursday of each month - 5 to 7 PM

Family Night at Governor's Restaurant

2/3 & 2/24, 3/3, 3/17

HO Operating Sessions,

2nd Thursday of each month - 6:30 PM

Executive Committee Meeting

3rd Thursday of each month - 6:30 PM

Regular Monthly Club Meeting

4th Thursday of each month - 7 PM

Modelers Forum

HO Work Sessions

Except for Operating Sessions and special events, work sessions are scheduled:

- 2nd & 4th Saturday 8:00 am to noon
- Every Wednesday 6:00 pm - 8:00 PM

Future Master Model Railroaders

No meetings under future notice

The 2/24 HO Operating Session will use steam power with early diesel yard power. Diesels from the 1930's or 40's will be appropriate. Bring your steamers or maybe a boxcab or borrow one from a fellow club member. We will have extra power for those who don't have dcc steam engines.

