



# THE SIGNAL



VOLUME 18. ISSUE 11

APRIL 2013



Member since June 1988

**NEXT MEETING**  
**April 18**  
**6:45 p.m.**

**NEXT MONTH**  
**Deadline for**  
**May Issue**  
**May 1, 2013**

MEMBERSHIP  
117

### ATTENDANCE PRIZE

Jay Calnan won the attendance prize.

Bryce Weeks won the 50/50 raffle.

Will your name be drawn on **April 18**?  
You have to be present to win!

### **BOTTLES FOR BASICS**

- ◆ Total LAST YEAR \$320.86
- ◆ YEAR TO DATE: \$187.75
- ◆ THIS MONTH: \$115.11
- ◆ \$34.65

## IT'S A SMALL WORLD

By Paul Lodge

Sometimes it's a small world! On Friday, March 15, Operation Lifesaver held their monthly meeting at The Great Falls Model Railroad Club. Operation Lifesaver presenter Gordon Riordon brought in an N-scale layout and donated it to the club.

At the club's monthly meeting on March 21, it was explained how the N-scale layout was acquired. It was observed that it was too heavy to use as a raffle layout, but might be converted into cash for the club if someone wanted it. To everyone's surprise, when a locomotive was put on the tracks and the power pack turned on, it worked beautifully! Wow! Considering it was headed for the dump, we were all surprised.

After the meeting, Ken Nettleship told some of the club members that he had built the layout when he was in upstate New York. He gave it to the owner of Rainy Day Trains as an N-scale display. He asked the owner to pass it along to a family with children who could appreciate it after he was through with it. The layout ends up at our club with the man who built it 25 years ago. What a story.

## THE REST OF THE STORY

By Ken Nettleship

The story begins in 1988 in Schenectady, NY. I had married my wife Daphne in May and we were renting an apartment just up the hill from the GE Locomotive plant. After seeing all of the activity at the bottom of the hill, I discovered that the dormant railroad gene in me had been awakened. I found a couple of local hobby stores and began to accumulate used track, switches and a few cars.

Next came a career change and a move to Falmouth, Maine, to a REALLY small apartment. I bought a couple of how-to books, one of which was the Atlas book on how to wire a model railroad. I wanted to be able to run two trains on a small layout and this book enlightened me to block control. I was excited and shared my vision of the new railroad with my new bride, who by now was wondering what "I do" really meant. I assured her that by modeling in N scale, which is only 1:160 of an inch, she would hardly notice it in our less than large apartment.

To make a long story short, a track plan was finalized, lumber was purchased and the used track that made its way from Schenectady, NY was finally laid.

Next, another move to our first house in Waterboro, Maine. The layout was carefully moved and progress resumed. It was time for scenery now, which meant the purchase of another book. This one was written by Dave Frary. To me, he is the scenery guru because he could teach a "ten-thumbed" guy like me how to get satisfactory results right out of the gate! I learned how to ballast, make rock molds

*(Continued on page 3)*

**Paul Lodge**

On the weekend of March 23 and 24, club members worked at two different events. Terry King and Tim Tyce attended the Maine 3-Railers show in Augusta. Terry reported that they were successful in selling a lot of our O-scale and Lionel excess inventory.

At the Owls Head Transportation Museum in Rockland, between twenty and twenty-five club members handed out flyers about up-coming events, ran trains, exhibited models, sold tickets on the raffle layout, and sold some excess inventory. Eight of the club members went to Rockland on Friday to set up the modules, and they stayed overnight Friday and Saturday for the show. As many as twelve members ate together at a restaurant and talked about club business and ideas for future events.

Back at the clubhouse, Stephen Martelli opened the doors so that club members who did not attend the other events could work on the layouts. Many people; many accomplishments.

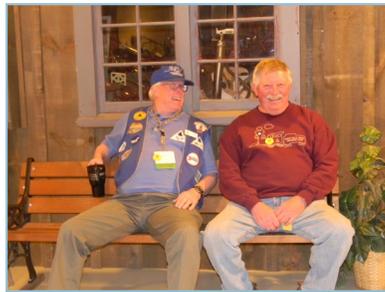
**WARNING:  
FLOOR TO BE PAINTED**

**Paul Lodge**

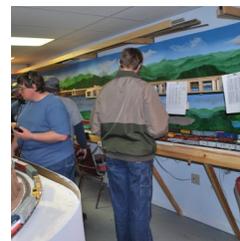
On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, May 6, 7, and 8; the floor on the lower level will be painted again. Because of the heavy traffic and the work being done on the scenery, the paint on the floor has been wearing off. When we have visitors for our Hobo Holiday event, we want the building to look good. Having the floor repainted will help. We have pride in our facility and having it clean and tidy gives a good impression.

In addition to having the floor painted, it is hoped that the stairs can be painted. The workbenches also need to be spruced up with a new coat of paint.

The HO layout is progressing very well and having the painting done will make it look even better.



**Come join the action on April 20!**



**THE SIGNAL**

*(Continued from page 1)*

from real rocks and latex rubber, lay ground foam as grass and make realistic looking trees. Thank you, Dave! As time permitted, I finally finished the layout and had a lot of fun with it.

As any model railroader will attest, bigger is better, right? My wife and I were looking for more room in our ranch so we discussed finishing the basement. She had her wish list and boy did I have mine. Although she got 75% of the available space, I got my "train room." In my head, I won!

I started going to train shows and adding to my N gauge collection. My little pike started to get in the way as my collection grew and the new layout started to come to fruition. I became acquainted with John Sholtiss, who owned Rainy Day Trains in Scarborough, Maine. I had recently been to the Springfield show and had seen G-scale trains. John at Rainy Day Trains pointed me in the right direction to get started in G-scale. I was working for the Family Patch Nursery in Scarborough, and John procured track for our display at the Portland Flower Show. Needless to say, with much help from John, our display was a success and very popular.

I asked John if he could use my little pike as a display or if he knew an interested little railroader that might not have the funds to put his/her own pike together. The last I saw my little railroad was in John's showroom. The year was 1996.

Fast forward to the March 21<sup>st</sup> GFMRRRC meeting. It was brought to the club's attention that a heavy N Scale layout which was "dump bound" had been donated by a member of Operation Lifesaver to the club. As the meeting went on, I kept staring at that layout. Something was familiar about it. After the meeting I walked over to the layout and, much to my surprise, there was my little pike! The layout was lacking the buildings and trees, and some of the plaster mountains had seen better days; but there it was. It's amazing that a quarter of a century after I started this layout it is still in once piece. I hope that someone adopts the layout and has as much fun with it as I did.

Ken Nettleship with his "lost" Layout!



Some more Happenings at the Class





## March Minutes by Paul Lodge

### MINUTES OF MARCH 21, 2013 MEETING

Before the meeting started, club members were treated to a slide presentation made by Ed Leslie on club activities during the past month. The evening's *TRAIN TIME* program featured the Finger Lakes Railroad based in Geneva, New York.

President Ed Leslie opened the meeting and asked for the Secretary's Report. A motion was made to accept the report as published in the *Signal*.

Tom Coulombe gave the Treasurer's Report, which was approved as given. He also provided figures for the proposed budget for the next fiscal year, noting that the budget proposal falls about \$10,000 short of what is needed to cover the club's expenses. He emphasized again the need for club members to pledge more than the \$30 annual dues.

As Station Master, Tom reported that the club will be represented at the Owls Head Transportation Museum's Model Festival on March 23 and 24. Terry King and Tim Tyce will attend the Maine 3-Railers show in Augusta. Stephen Martelli has volunteered to have the clubhouse open on Saturday, March 23, for members who want to work on the layouts. On Saturday and Sunday, April 6 and 7, the club will participate in a new show in Rochester, New Hampshire. Dick Rubin and Ralph Luby will be setting up their G-gauge double helix and a new feature, a mono-rail train set. They are trying to teach a number of club members to set up the display so that it can be done more efficiently when they set it up at our shows. Taking the display down on Sunday needs as much care as setting it up; therefore, additional help is requested for Sunday as well as Saturday. The exhibit will also be used for our show at Mount Ararat on Saturday, April 27. On Friday, April 26, at 4 o'clock members can help unload the club truck and set up dealer tables at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham.

**WARNING:** On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, May 6, 7, and 8; the lower level floor in the HO layout area will be repainted. The workbenches will also be repainted at that time. If there is time, the stairs will be stained again.

**Layout updates:** Travis Johnson reported that the March operating session was very well attended. Some problems were identified and work is being done to correct them. He noted that the next operating session will be April 20.

Ken Nettleship said the G-gauge group had met and made some decisions on what they want to do with the winter scene people see as they enter the clubhouse. They are hoping to add three elements to the winter scene. Dick Clark is building a ski scene with animated skiers coming down the hill. A skating rink will be installed and an ice harvesting scene will be added. Ray Parent will check to be sure the radius will handle long passenger cars and a switch will need to be replaced. The G-gauge group decided to leave the engine house scene as it is with more details added. It was reported that Dave Kierstead has donated four cars and some animals for the G-gauge layout.

Tom Coulombe reported that white LED lights have been added on the N-scale layout, and some scenery work has been completed.

**Nominating Committee:** President Leslie gave the names of those who have been appointed to the Nominating Committee: Roger Plummer, Maurice Fortin, and chairman Rick James. They will provide the club with a slate of officers and directors at the April 18 meeting.

**Newsletter Update:** Rick James is encouraging everyone to submit articles for publication in the club's newsletter. Anyone who has questions about receiving the newsletter should contact him.

**Club Banner:** When the club was represented at the West Springfield show, it was noted that there was no large club banner which could be used to promote the club. A six-foot by two-foot double-sided banner is being proposed. Members at the March meeting were given five options for a design of the banner. The winning design has been given to Marquis Signs, and they will make the banner.

**Cottage Industry:** Jerry Johnston promoted the "Cottage Industry" concept to help bring in extra funds for the club. He listed several of the ideas on which club members are working. Some club members are upgrading buildings and rolling stock which can then be sold at shows at a higher price. Roger Plummer is taking some of the trucks which have been donated to the club and painting and adding details to them so that they can be sold at premium prices. Stone and brick wall elements as well as loads of coal are being made to sell at shows. Rita Vatter and Terry James are developing ideas which may result in another fund-raising project. Jerry asked club members to be thinking about anything which can be made that will help generate additional funds for the club.

A new feature at each monthly meeting will be "Did You Know?" This month Paul Lodge brought in the official club locomotive paint scheme which was voted upon in the early 1990's. He explained that the white stripe on the locomotive came from the side of the 1955

Ford Fairlane Victoria. The dark blue and gray was used because it is a classic men's blazer and slacks outfit. (See article elsewhere in the newsletter.)

Ed Webb presented the "What's on Your Workbench" feature. He displayed an engine house he has built from basswood. This is the result of taking the class offered by Ed and Brenda Leslie in their basswood barn clinic. Next month Bob Willard will bring something for this segment.

Tom Coulombe exhibited a truck that had been upgraded by Roger Plummer. A lot of detail had been added to the truck and is an example of what can be done with some paint and ingenuity.

The meeting adjourned.

## MULTI-MEDIA PROJECT

### Paul Lodge

Club members may have noticed Peter Frick-Wright taking photos and video and using audio equipment while interviewing club members on two Saturdays in March. Peter is a student at the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies in Portland. He is taking a concentrated course in multi-media studies for four and a half months from February to mid-May. An article in the *Portland Press Herald* about our club's participation in the Lions Club Model Railroad and Dollhouse Show in Augusta featured interviews with some of our club members. Peter was intrigued by some of the comments he read and decided to do his required video profile project on our club. An interest in radio journalism was Peter's original pursuit. He spent a lot of time interviewing and recording Travis Johnson for this project. The finished project is to be condensed into about two and a half minutes. He was at the club on three different occasions for a total of about twelve to fifteen hours.

In 2007, Peter graduated from high school in Portland, Oregon. He has two older sisters. For other interests, he has enjoyed mountain biking and has helped with inflatable events and Pensky truck rentals.



## DID YOU KNOW? Tidbits from the Past

### Paul Lodge

As a new feature at the end of club meetings, the "Did You Know?" series is designed to help new members learn how we got to where we are. The club is now more than 25 years old, and it is important to pass along to new members these stories of interest from the early years.

At the March meeting, Paul Lodge displayed the official club locomotive paint scheme. In the early 1990's a contest was created to design a winning paint scheme. Between six and eight locomotives were entered anonymously so that those voting would not know the identity of the designer. The locomotive paint scheme which won was submitted by Paul Lodge.

The paint scheme is based on two primary elements. The classic men's blue blazer, white shirt, and gray slacks were used as the basis for the psychologically impressive paint scheme. This blazer outfit seems to create an instant form of respect. There are many subliminal elements in our lives which create an effect on us, and we don't really know why. For example, you might get a little nervous if a man dressed in farmer overalls and flannel shirt sat down in the cockpit of the 747 jet in which you plan to fly. The image we have in our minds unconsciously affects our attitudes.

The second element of the paint scheme is the curved white stripe along the side of the locomotive. It is based on the chrome strip along the side of the 1955 Ford Fairlane Victoria. On our model it represents the Andros-coggin River. The total picture gives the blue top as sky, the white stripe as water, and the gray base as land.

This is just one of many stories from our club's history. There will be more to share at other meetings.





## 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



April 13, Backdrop Painting for the Reluctant Painter

April 11, Executive Committee meeting

April 18, Membership Meeting

April 20, Operating Session

April 27, Train Show: Mt. Ararat

May 9, Executive Committee Meeting

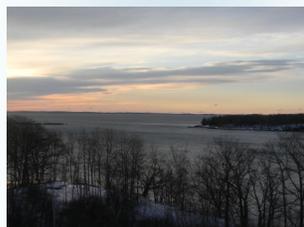
May 16, Membership Meeting, Election of officers

May 18, Hobo Holiday

August 17, Train Fest

November 2, Train Show:  
Auburn Middle School

November 23-25 and  
29-30: ExTRAINaganza



Sunset in Rockland

**September 7-10, 2016**, 36th National Narrow Gauge Convention at Augusta, Me.



If I could just run one more train than Travis did.....