

Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING
February 21
6:45 p.m.

NEXT
MONTH
Deadline for
March Issue
March 1, 2013

MEMBERSHIP
117

ATTENDANCE PRIZE

The Attendance Prize was won by Ken Nettleship and he selected a Montreal, Maine and Atlantic hat.

Will your name be drawn on **Feb. 21**?
You have to be present to win!

BOTTLES FOR BASICS

- ♦ LAST YEAR \$320.86
- ♦ YEAR TO DATE: \$187.75
- ♦ THIS MONTH: \$30.65



THE SIGNAL

THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 16. ISSUE 9

FEBRUARY 2013



RAILROAD HOBBY SHOW IN WEST SPRINGFIELD, MA

Paul Lodge

About twenty club members from The Great Falls Model Railroad Club attended the Amherst Railroad Society train show at the Eastern States Exposition fairgrounds in West Springfield, Massachusetts, on Saturday and Sunday, January 26 and 27. This is the first year that the club has participated in the event with a railroad display. The double helix designed and built by Ralph Luby and Dick Rubin was exhibited at the show for the first time. The club logo was proudly and prominently displayed, giving credit to our club.

Those who operated the layout had fun with the children by stopping the train about three inches from their noses and calling, "All aboard!" and then slowly starting the engine again. Two of Ralph Luby's friends from Michigan attended the show. One of them had brought some eggliners with sound. These created quite a hit when they were added to the layout.

Dick Rubin has been planning for this event for nearly a year. His physical condition, however, prevented him from going to the show. Tom Coulombe was asked to make arrangements to be sure the layout got to West Springfield and that there would be enough help to set up and monitor the helix layout. Tom got blue table coverings from the Auburn Mall, hauled the equipment to Massachusetts, helped set up and tear down the helix layout, and monitored it during the event.

Many club members stepped in to help at the show. Even with five people, it took four hours to set up the helix layout. With six people, it took only two hours to take it down. Club members who helped monitor and/or set up and tear down the layout are as follows: Ed and Brenda Leslie, Tom Coulombe, Ray Parent, Ralph Luby, Ken Nettleship, Carmen Anastase, Jerry Johnston, Nancy Weeks, Bryce Weeks, and Travis Johnson.

Other club members who were seen at the show include Maurice and Collette Fortin, Jay Calnan, Dick Holman, Roger Plummer, Peter McKenney, Larry Cannon, Colby Miles, John Robertson, and Bob Willard.

Over 20,500 people attended the train show, and the show director mentioned that he had received many favorable comments about the interesting and unique helix exhibit. The club has been invited to participate again next year.

The club wishes to thank all the members who attended this event and helped make our first inclusion in the train show a success.



“Travis is the head of the HO layout committee at the club. He coordinates the continuing building, electrical, and scenery aspects of the layout “

Meet the members By Maurice Fortin

Travis Johnson

Travis is a bachelor and currently lives with his grandparents. He is employed as a flagger for Ace Security. In 2004 when he was a junior in high school, he bought his first Model Railroader magazine and has been interested in model railroading every since.

He told me he went to a GFMRR Club yard sale during the Balloon Festival, paid his dues, and became a member. From there he took the course offered at the club and has become a very active member.

Travis is most interested in HO scale railroading but has also nibbled in N scale. He currently has a small 4- by 8-foot HO layout at home, but has plans for a larger one. Travis is the head of the HO layout committee at the club. He coordinates the continuing building, electrical, and scenery aspects of the layout. He is actively involved in the monthly Operating Sessions and plans train runs. Travis is organized and a good teacher for the younger modelers who participate.

He recently completed the Operation Lifesaver course and gave his first presentation at Minot Consolidated School with Paul Lodge.

Travis has other interests besides model railroading. He is currently taking classes to earn his ham radio license. (editors note: He passed his test on Feb 4!) He enjoys reading and has found a liking for a video Star Trek game. He enjoys it so much that he has started watching the Star Trek movies. Do we have a budding "Trekkie"?



Turnout rebuild classes scheduled for March 2nd and April 6th

Learn to rebuild older turnouts for better DC and true DCC operation. Class is four hours long. Items needed for class will be: Rail nips, ACC, hobby knife with a no.11 blade, Pliers (needle nose and flat), small screwdriver, soldering iron or gun with flux and solder. Optional: Turnout from home to be rebuilt and rail joiners.

March 2nd

Instructors: Travis Johnson and Darin Long
Helper: Roger Plummer

April 6th

Instructors: Travis Johnson and Roger Plummer
Helper: Darin Long

FIRST CHOICE

Paul Lodge

The club occasionally receives donations of model railroad equipment and sometimes buys equipment from people who are moving or whose family member has died. Although some of these items are used for the club layouts, the rest becomes excess inventory to sell, which helps support the club financially. Club members will have a chance to purchase some of this equipment before it goes on sale at a train show. Each month Tom Coulombe will bring to the monthly club meeting some of the model railroad supplies for club members to buy. This effort is the result of many members asking to have first choice on purchasing the equipment before it goes on sale at a train show.

In case you see something that you just can't get along without, come prepared to buy.

**FEBRUARY MEETING HAS
SPECIAL SPEAKER****Paul Lodge**

At the February 21st club meeting, **Robert Kenderdine** from Stewart Hobbies, Inc. will be the guest speaker. Stewart Hobbies has been in business for about seventeen years. Their line features locomotives, freight cars, and detail parts in HO scale. The locomotive line features models with top of the line drives from Alco, Baldwin, EMD, and GE.

Many club members purchase equipment from Stewart Hobbies. The opportunity to speak with Mr. Kenderdine will give members a chance to ask about the company's future plans.



Here is a monthly meeting of Operation Lifesaver
held at Friendly's in Augusta.
Six members of the Great Falls Model RR Club were present.





January Minutes by Paul Lodge

MINUTES OF JANUARY 17, 2013 MEETING

The evening's TRAIN TIME program featured Amtrak's expansion to Brunswick. Video from three different years was used to document progress from the beginning to the final event of the ribbon cutting ceremony at the Brunswick station.

Because last month was the Christmas Party, there was no Secretary's Report.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Tom Coulombe who gave an appeal for club members to pledge money for this new year. He noted that last year club members pledged more than \$6,000 in cash contributions and gave in-kind materials valued at more than \$4,000. It is these contributions beyond the annual dues which keep the club from failing in its financial obligations. Forms are available from Tom for club members to pledge additional financial support. He explained that the funds from our train shows and special events help keep us solvent. The Sanford show in April, however, may not happen. That is one more money-making event we cannot count on. A Fund-raising Committee is being developed and Jerry Johnston has been appointed to start the group. Any member who wishes to help find creative solutions to our financial future can contact Jerry and volunteer to help. The Treasurer's Report was approved as given.

As Station Master, Tom Coulombe reported that a platform has been built in the Mountain Division section of the HO layout. The automatic sensor which automatically turns on the lights at the lower level entrance is used so often that it causes the fluorescent lights to fail more often. A regular wall switch has been installed to replace the sensor switch. Because manufacturers will not be producing 8-foot lights in the future, it was agreed that standard 4-foot lighting fixtures should be used to replace them. A bulletin board has been installed in the HO division. Phil Clough acquired a \$3,000 collection of rolling stock and engines which he has donated to the club. Tom noted that some of that rolling stock has been brought to the club meeting so that members can have first choice before it goes on sale at a train show. Tom said he will bring in more rolling stock each month. Joe Marshall has requested pictures of excess inventory items which can then be

used on our website to sell the items. The Christmas decorations have been taken to Jerry Johnston's house for storage. The next raffle layout has been completed and Tom used it as part of a railroad display at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Brunswick. The club has loaned two HO locomotives to the Children's Museum in Augusta. Children there love to run the trains and they wear out. Travis Johnson is currently working on one of the locomotives. A motion was made and accepted to approve Tom's Station Master's Report.

Layout Reports: Travis Johnson reminded club members of the operating session on Saturday after the monthly club meeting. He reported that the HO group can use pieces (even small pieces) of wood in the fascia that Stephen Martelli is working on. Stephen said that chip board can also be used. One-half inch plastic pipe is also needed for wires. Ken Nettleship reported that the G-gauge group is currently involved with the Amherst Railroad Society event in West Springfield and will be meeting after the show to start more work on the G-gauge layout. Tom Coulombe brought in LED lights and had them displayed on the N-scale layout. The LEDs are to be used to light the background on the layout.

Activities Report: Rob Kenderdine of Steward Hobbies, Inc., will be the guest speaker at the regular club meeting in February.

What's on Your Workbench: Travis Johnson displayed a locomotive which he plans to convert to DCC. He showed how the lettering on the car had been blocked out so that it can be repainted as one of the St. Lawrence & Atlantic blue lease units. Turnouts were distributed so that club members could see how they are reworked for use on a DCC layout.

Out of the Boxcar: Bob Purington showed examples of silos he has made by using discarded medicine bottles as the base and wrapping them with different kinds of siding.

Bryce Weeks displayed his new J Class Norfolk & Western 4-8-4 steam locomotive.

Stephen Martelli won the 50/50 raffle.

The Attendance Prize was won by Ken Nettleship and he selected a Montreal, Maine and Atlantic hat.

The meeting adjourned.

NEW MODEL RAILROADING CLASS STARTED

Paul Lodge

On Tuesday, February 5, 2013, the spring semester of the club's Model Railroading class started. There are ten participants, six of whom will be making new modules. This time two grandmothers are taking the class with their grandsons. Many in the class have recently become club members. As usual, there is a wide variety of background skills with these ten members. Class members come from Waterville, Hollis, Brunswick, Mechanic Falls, and Auburn.

One of the activities planned for this class will be the renovation of some of our older modules. This "sprucing up" will give the older modules a new life and add interest to our future train shows.

Modules created and refurbished will be included in the Mt. Ararat show on April 27. If the class is completed early enough, layout tours can be planned.

With six new modules being made, club members who would like to come and help would be greatly appreciated.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED (Wife wants husband back!)

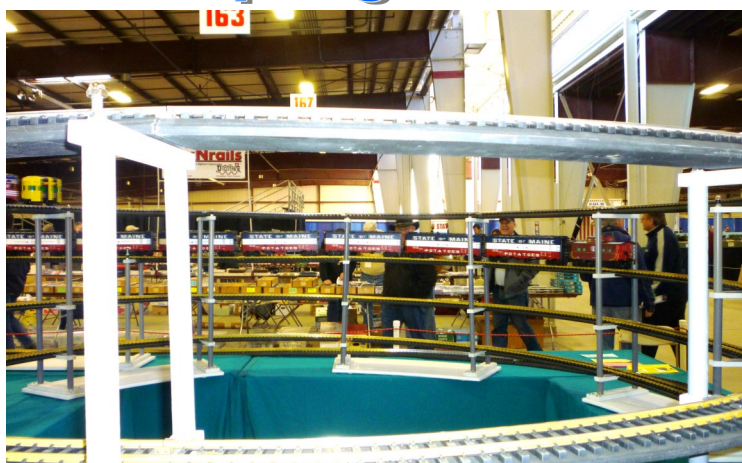
Paul Lodge

Tom Coulombe is a super volunteer for The Great Falls Model Railroad Club. He is the treasurer, station master, HO dispatcher, N and Z-scale modeler at the club. He also inventories and values model railroad donations and is a round robin participant. Tom is in charge of organizing our club shows at Auburn Middle School in November and at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham in April. In order to be prepared for the shows, Tom loads the truck with excess inventory items and modules needed at the shows, and drives the truck to the shows.

Tom's wife wonders if there are any other members in the club. Tom's giving personality does not let him ask for help very often, and he expects members to volunteer to help when they are available.

Recently, the club has hosted birthday parties (and potentially showers). Tom supervises the building during the parties and then cleans up after each party. The parties usually last for about two hours. The club can use some volunteers to supervise the club for a couple of hours during the parties. If club members notice that a party is being scheduled, it would be good if they contacted Tom and volunteered their time to be at the club during the event. You would not need to come for every party, just let Tom know when you are available.

Springfield





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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Upcoming Events



February 12, Adult Ed Model
Railroad , 6:30 - 8:30

February 14 Exec Committee
meeting

February 16, Whitefield Lions
Club Annual Model Railroad and
Dollhouse Show, Augusta Armory,
10:00 - 3:30

February 21 Membership
Meeting

March 2, Turnout Rebuild Class

March 14, Executive Committee
meeting

March 21, Membership Meeting

March 23, Owls Head Hobby
Show

April 6, Turnout Rebuild Class

April 27, Train Show: Mt. Ararat

May 18, Hobo Holiday

August 17, Train Fest

November 2, Train Show: Au-
burn Middle School

November 23-25 and 29-
30: ExTRAINaganza

September 7-10, 2016, 36th
National Narrow Gauge Conven-
tion at Augusta, Me.

Photos by Dick Clark, Terry King
and Tom Coulombe



Photo by Terry King