



The Signal

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club



VOLUME 38 . ISSUE 8

JANUARY 2015



Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING
January 15
6:45 p.m.

NEXT MONTH
Deadline for
February Issue
February 3, 2015

MEMBERSHIP
126

ATTENDANCE PRIZE

There were 3 winners who won Attendance Prizes.

Maybe next meeting it will be YOU!

Will your name be drawn on

January 15?

You have to be present to win!

BOTTLES FOR BASICS

- ◆ Total LAST YEAR
- ◆ \$736.48
- ◆ YEAR TO DATE:
- ◆ \$435.23
- ◆ THIS MONTH:
- ◆ \$100.00

Donations of Used Ink and Toner Cartridges:
Last Month: \$24.00
Year to Date: \$146.00

MIKE REED

By Paul Lodge

On November 22, club member Mike Reed was diagnosed with cancer. He passed away on December 18. This was a shock to all the club members. Mike had been interested in model railroading since he was a pre-teenager. Before the club started in 1986, when Mike was between ten and twelve years old, he would come to the Freight Station at the Taylor Brook Mall and hang out with the adults who gathered there. His wit and sense of humor were evident even then.

In about 2007, Mike became interested in speeders (also known as rail cars or putt putts). He became close friends with Foster Leavitt from Saco, who owned two speeders. Mr. Leavitt and his friends enjoyed many trips on their speeders in Maine and New Hampshire. As Foster moved into his 80's, he was no longer physically able to handle the heavy equipment. Mike purchased Foster's rail cars and began taking trips of his own. He once invited Stephen Martelli to take a ride with him. Stephen was surprised when the trip turned out to be more of a work day cutting trees and brush along the tracks.

This year Mike made available a rail car shell, which was purchased by Tom Coulombe for the club. Mike paid to have the rail car painted in Maine Central colors of yellow with green lettering. In September Ed Webb, Travis Johnson, and Tom Coulombe helped Mike install the speeder on a small section of track near the club sign on the corner of Fifth Street and Mill Street.

Mike had other hobby interests as well. He also enjoyed many outdoor activities: hunting, fishing, boating, riding ATVs and snowmobiles.

We will miss Mike at the club. He visited the club frequently and entertained the guys with his stories and insight into many of life's adventures.



WEST SPRINGFIELD HERE WE COME

By Paul Lodge

The train show at the Big E in West Springfield is the largest train show in New England. Last year the Great Falls Model Railroad Club's extensive G-gauge display won "Best in Show" honors. On January 24 and 25, the club will participate in this event for the third time. The G-gauge layout has been a favorite part of the show the last two years, and we expect that this display will be as entertaining and eye-catching as those in the past.

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CLUB DISPLAYS

AT BELGRADE

By Ken Nettleship

On Friday, December 12, Dick Clark, Nancy and Bryce Weeks, Ken Nettleship, Travis Johnson and his fiancée Anna represented the Great Falls Model Railroad Club at the annual "Train Night" at the Belgrade Community Center. Dick and Ken arrived around 3:45 p.m. and set up three loops of G-Gauge track and a winter scene, using some of Dick's buildings, figures, and trees. Nancy and Bryce arrived shortly after Dick and Ken. Travis and Anna brought his HO layout in his trailer, which was pulled by the Hobo's truck. (Thank you, Hobo.) They went to work assembling a 4' x 8' HO section to create a switching layout. The Maine 3-Railers set up a two-loop Lionel scene with equipment from the "Polar Express," with buildings, trees, etc.

At 6 p.m. the doors opened and the community was welcomed with dimmed lights and three operating train layouts. The layouts were equipped with lights, making a wonderful atmosphere for the kids and adults to enjoy. Santa Claus arrived and made his rounds, advising the kids to be good because Christmas was coming. Santa visited both Bryce and Travis as well. As old as he is, Santa was still limber enough to get on the floor and "play trains" with the little ones, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed watching.

On the other side of the Community Center, the movie *Polar Express* was playing. The little ones were all wearing their "jammies" and sitting on mats on the floor with their blankets.

At 8 p.m. the lights went on and the parents grabbed the little ones and made for the door. The Great Falls Railroad Club crew broke down the layouts and headed home. The folks who organized the event, as well as those who attended, were very appreciative of the clubs' efforts.

For many adults, the trains brought back memories of younger days. A lot of people stopped by the Maine 3-Railers layout and enjoyed their Lionel O-Gauge display. A couple of folks said that they had Lionel trains when they were young.

According to the organizer of the Belgrade Community Center Train Night, this proved to be "the best yet." The addition of the Brio set and the train toys on the play rug gave more enjoyment for the children than they had seen in years past. Travis had the pleasure of letting children operate his HO trains. Ken and Dick enjoyed presenting their G-gauge display and seeing the families respond to the trains.



CHRISTMAS PARTY A GREAT SUCCESS

By Paul Lodge

About fifty club members attended the club Christmas party on December 18. Some of the people at the Christmas Party had not been to the club recently, and they enjoyed seeing the improvements in the layouts and the Christmas decorations throughout the building.

The meeting began with a Power Point show with slides from activities of the club since last month. Dick Clark presented a video of the December 13 Christmas event at the Belgrade Community Center.

During the evening many club members gave pledges as part of next year's *Utility Team*. The pledges are in two categories: a \$150 pledge to cover one month's electric bill, or a \$30 pledge to pay for the monthly water bill. The pledges at this meeting totaled \$1,560. The purpose of the pledges is to keep the annual dues at \$30. Since the \$30 dues do not cover the cost of the building, members who can afford to step forward and pledge additional funds help to keep the club running. Approximately one third of the annual income for the club comes from pledges from club members. The *Utility Team* is an important part of the fund-raising aspect of the club and one of the few times when members are asked for special donations.

Everyone brought enough food so that no one went away hungry. The desserts were varied. There were chocolate brownies, chocolate cookies, chocolate chip cookies, chocolate-covered Oreos, and some non-chocolate items, including cakes and cheesecakes. For the main course, there were casseroles, meatballs, finger rolls, pigs in a blanket, and other delicious eatables.

John Visco brought about a dozen calendars to the meeting. The calendars sold for \$15 each, with \$5 going to the club. John is an outstanding photographer with a great camera. One calendar was filled with wonderful colored pictures John had taken of our HO layout. The other calendar consisted of historic photos of the Bates Mill complex. John plans to have some more calendars made.

This annual event gives members an opportunity to socialize. For those who don't come to the club regularly, it gives them a chance to see the layout changes and improvements.



MODEL RAILROADING CLASS STARTS FEBRUARY 10

By Paul Lodge

The 2015 spring semester Model Railroading class starts on Tuesday, February 10, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The Great Falls Model Railroad Club has been offering this eight-week course for more than twenty years. The classes were originally given at Edward Little High School as part of the Auburn Adult Education program. The course is still part of Auburn Adult Education, but it has been taught at the clubhouse on Mill Street in Auburn for the past five years.

Hundreds of people have taken the class, and many of them have become club members. Nearly every time the class has been offered in the past several years, children have taken the course with their parents or grandparents. This makes the class a family event. Our club has a 501(c)(3) Educational Foundation designation, and the course exemplifies the club's commitment to the basic educational philosophy.

The class has been successful because many club members help. Usually there are enough volunteers so that each student has a club member to work with him or her.

People can register for the course through the Auburn Adult Education program by calling 784-9220. The registration fee is \$15. For more information about taking the course or helping students, contact Paul Lodge at 966-3641.



December Minutes by Paul Lodge



MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2014

A Power Point presentation of club activities in November and December was shown. Dick Clark then narrated his video of the club's participation at the Belgrade Community Center.

President Jay Calnan opened the meeting and asked for the Secretary's Report. A motion was made to accept the report as published in the *Signal*. Paul Lodge read a thank-you letter from *Safe Voices*. The club annually donates toys to this organization at Christmas time.

Tom Coulombe gave a brief Treasurer's Report indicating the revenue from the Brewer show, the ExTRAINaganza, and the Surplus Inventory Sale.

Tom Coulombe announced that Mike Reed was diagnosed with cancer on November 22, the Saturday before Thanksgiving, and died on December 17. A sympathy card was circulated for members to sign for Mike's wife, Renee.

At the Executive Committee meeting on December 11, there was a brief discussion about the success of this year's ExTRAINaganza. Because we have had poor attendance on Monday every year, it was agreed that we should discontinue the Monday schedule. During the ExTRAINaganza, several raffles were going on at the same time. We had the "12 Gifts of Christmas," the afghan, the three trains under the Christmas trees, and the raffle layout. It was agreed that next year we should have only the raffle layout and the trains under the Christmas trees. In order to have a higher return on those trains, an effort should be made to have local businesses sponsor them. Ray and Robins was suggested as one of the companies to approach.

It was reported that the club received good publicity as a result of our participation at the Maine State Museum on Friday and Saturday, December 5 and 6.

On December 13, the club sponsored its first "Surplus Inventory Sale." The club received more than \$2,400 from sales. A majority of the people who attended were not club members, and it was the first time some of them had been to the club. The birthday party on Sunday, December 14, from 1 to 3 p.m. was the third party for Hunter at the club. Tom Coulombe reported that an N-scale train has been loaned to the Chamber of Commerce for their Christmas display. Paul Lodge noted that he and Ed Webb had set up a Christmas tree and train at the Woman's Literary Union on Elm Street in Auburn for their annual open

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house. On Saturday, March 28, the Maine 3-Railers will have their annual train show in Augusta.

New blue hats with embroidered club name and logo have been received. Because of the increased cost of the hats, the price will be \$18 each.

Tom Coulombe reported that on January 23 we will be setting up a 40- by 44-foot G-gauge layout at the West Springfield Show. The show takes place on January 24 and 25. We will have a dozen trains running on two levels. The Auburn Mall will loan us specialized table covers for this event again this year.

Mike Reed had donated a 4-6-2 locomotive and tender which will need some restoration. This is a large locomotive which runs on 3 1/2 inch wide rail. It was suggested that the engine be finished and placed in a cabinet with a plaque indicating that it is in memory and appreciation of Mike Reed. Because he was a classmate of Mike Reed, Darin Long volunteered to build a display case for this donation. John Visco will also consult on the project.

At the end of the meeting and before the party began, the 50/50 raffle was drawn and Jay Calnan won. Something different at this December meeting was the drawing of three attendance prizes. Jerry Johnston gave each member at the meeting a ticket. Numbers were drawn and Roger Plummer won an Xacto knife set, Ray Jalbert won a Canadian National caboose, and Terry James won a club pin.



(Continued from page 1)

Dick Rubin and Ralph Luby have been instrumental in getting publicity for the club at this event. Ralph Luby creates and engineers a different layout for each show, and he is good at it. This year he has designed a layout that will have a dozen trains running on two levels at the same time. We expect to use more than 40 tables for the layout, which will cover approximately a 40- by 44-foot area. David Lee from the Auburn Mall has graciously allowed the club to borrow the special fire-resistant table coverings which are required. Considering that about 250 dealers have been turned away for lack of space, we are pleased that this much area has been designated for us.

Several club members have committed their time to this event for four or five days. One day is planned to go to Wells and load vehicles with all the supplies needed for the layout. Another day is scheduled for transportation to West Springfield and starting to set up the display. After the two days of the event, the team will take down the layout and bring it back to Wells. Five model railroad enthusiasts from Michigan will come to be part of the team, three of whom were part of the team last year.

AARP TAX TRAINING AT THE CLUB

By Paul Lodge

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club hosted AARP income tax training sessions on Saturday, November 8, and Monday, December 8. These one-day special training sessions stressed the new Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) and its implications for the 2014 tax returns. The training sessions included about thirty AARP and VITA volunteer tax counselors from Lewiston, Auburn, Norway, Poland, Naples, Bridgton, Rumford, and Portland.

Carole Ressler, the instructor, thanked the club for the use of our facility and equipment.

AARP offers free federal and state income tax preparation, including the Maine Property Tax Fairness Credit, at various locations throughout the state of Maine. Taxes are prepared and filed electronically by IRS-certified volunteers from February 1 to April 15. People of all ages with low to moderate income are eligible for this service unless they have business or rental income. You do not have to be a member of AARP. Appointments may be scheduled at the Lewiston Armory by calling 513-3170; Norway Library, 333-6448; Poland Library, 998-3166; Rumford SCORE Office, 364-3633 (call between 5 and 7 p.m.); Bridgton Community Center, 647-3116; Fryeburg Library, 935-2731; and Carrabassett Valley Library, 246-2157.



FIRST SURPLUS INVENTORY SALE AT THE CLUB

By Paul Lodge

During the week of December 8, Tom Coulombe transported approximately forty boxes of model railroad supplies from his barn to the club and began displaying them on about a dozen tables. Available for sale were Lionel, G-gauge, HO Scale, and N Scale equipment. In addition, there were transformers, power packs, track, and structures of all kinds.

While at the club for work sessions and meetings during the week of set-up, some club members purchased items even before the sale. On Saturday, December 13, the doors were opened at 8 a.m. and people were already waiting to get in. Some of them had to go to work and wanted to come to the sale first. It was estimated that approximately eighty percent of the people who came during the day were non-club members, including some from as far away as Steuben and Wells.

One of the purposes of the sale was to give club members an opportunity to see what is available from the club surplus inventory. At a show, we cannot afford to rent enough tables to display all of our inventory. Tom estimated that even at this sale, we still displayed only about eighty percent of what we have.

Treasurer Tom Coulombe indicated that the Surplus Inventory Sale brought in about \$2,400 of additional income to help pay for the mortgage, taxes, fuel oil, and other budget items.

Thanks to all who helped make this new fund-raising event a success.





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



January 8 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30 p.m.

January 15 Club Meeting 6:45 p.m.

January 17 Operating Session 8:30 to Noon

January 20 Retired Renovators 9 a.m.

January 22 Modeler's Forum 7 p.m.

January 24 & 25 West Springfield Show

February 3 Retired Renovators 9 a.m.

February 7 Operating Session 8:30 to Noon

February 10 Retired Renovators 9 a.m.

February 10 Model Railroading Class 6:30 p.m.

February 12 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30 p.m.

February 17 Retired Renovators 9 a.m.

February 17 Model Railroading Class 6:30 p.m.

February 19 Club Meeting 6:45 p.m.

February 21 Augusta Dollhouse/ Train Show 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

February 24 Retired Renovators 9 a.m.

February 24 Model Railroading class 6:30 p.m.

February 26 Modeler's Forum 7 p.m.

February 28 Operating Session 8:30 to Noon

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