



The Signal

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club



VOLUME 15. ISSUE 4

SEPTEMBER 2015



Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING
September 17
6:45 p.m.

NEXT MONTH
Deadline for
October Issue
October 2, 2015

MEMBERSHIP
130

ATTENDANCE PRIZE

Tami Paine
won the Attendance
Prize.
Maybe next meeting
it will be YOU!
Will your name be
drawn on
September 17?
You have to be
present to win!

BOTTLES FOR **BASICS**

- ◆ **Total LAST YEAR**
- ◆ **\$700.23**
- ◆ **YEAR TO DATE:**
- ◆ **\$212.00**
- ◆ **Last MONTH:**
- ◆ **\$58.00**

Donations of Used
Ink and Toner
Cartridges:
Last Month: \$14.00
Year to Date:
\$73.00



MAINE MODEL RAILROAD **TOUR** **SEPTEMBER 19, 2015**



By Paul Lodge

The Maine Model Railroad Tour Organizing Committee, representing thirteen co-sponsoring organizations, including the Great Falls Model Railroad Club, has been working since October 2014 to conceptualize and plan a free, self-guided layout tour schedule in Maine this year. After eight months of work and research, the committee has made some major decisions. The original plan was to have the layout tours in conjunction with the Maine Narrow Gauge show in Gray. The date for that show, however, had to be changed to the following weekend because of a scheduling conflict at the school. The tour is now a stand-alone activity for Saturday, September 19, and Sunday, September 20.

There are 32 layouts on the tour. The Great Falls Model Railroad Club is one of them, and several members' home layouts are also included on the tour. The variety of layouts includes five different scales, different layout sizes and configurations, different stages of construction and completion, different control systems, and different philosophies of model railroading.

The purpose is to have fun and encourage Maine modelers to learn from each other, get to know each other, and broaden their perspectives in this wonderful hobby. Except for a few train shows that occur in Maine each year, modelers in this state seldom have opportunities to substantially expand their horizons and pool their resources.

Some layout owners had expressed their hesitancy to open their layouts to "strangers." Therefore, the Organizing Committee chose to limit invitations and registrations to only members or associates of the 13 co-sponsors. In addition, each eligible visitor will be allowed to invite one "guest" to accompany them during the tour. We hope many Great Falls Model Railroad Club members will register and enjoy this experience. Complete details of the tour are online at www.mainemodellrtours.com. Registration is required at the same website for those who wish to visit these layouts.

This layout tour is considered to be a "dry run" for the 36th National Narrow Gauge Convention scheduled for Augusta, Maine, on September 7 through 10, 2016. This major convention will host people from all over the world. It is hoped that many or all of these 24 layouts will be available for tours during that time.

For more information, contact Bob Willard, Terry King, Tom Coulombe, or Larry Cannon.



Union Pacific train set for sale in GFMRR Club Gift Shop, thanks to Retired Renovators

TRAIN FEST WEEKEND

A SUCCESS

By Paul Lodge

On Saturday and Sunday, August 22 and 23, the Great Falls Model Railroad Club hosted its fifth annual Train Fest. Dates for this event correspond to those of the Lewiston/Auburn Balloon Festival. Many people who visited the club for the first time, including several from other states, had come to Auburn for the Balloon Festival. Jerry Johnston and his crew placed Train Fest signs along the roads leading to the club house. A high percentage of those attending the event indicated they came because they saw the signs.

This year more than 170 adults and 110 children attended the Train Fest. Ten families signed up to receive email notices of future events. As usual, many families with young children attended the event, ran trains, and played games.

Tickets were sold at the door so that children could play the “Roundhouse Roulette” and “Balloon Bag Toss” games. They could also use one of their tickets to become a “Guest Engineer” on the HO layout. Winners at the “Balloon Bag Toss” game entered their names to win tickets to the Boothbay Railroad Village or a gift certificate to Governor’s Restaurant. Governor’s Restaurant & Bakery also provided balloons and chocolate chip cookies for the Train Fest.

“The Great Balloon Chase” scavenger hunt asked guests to find specific hot air balloon images on the walls in the three layout rooms. After finding all the items, guests brought their completed cards back to the game room. Each person was then awarded a Governor’s “hot air balloon” with a Reese’s Peanut Butter Cup in the balloon’s “basket.” We gave out more than a hundred Governor’s balloons with Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups.

Several club members helped in the HO layout room to guide the trains of “Guest Engineers” throughout the layout. Many of these helpers are members of the club’s Future Master Model Railroaders Committee.

On Saturday, Jerry Johnston provided a lunch for the club members who came to help with the event. On Sunday, Nancy Weeks provided the food for the members. Jerry Johnston, Tom Coulombe, and Terry King sold excess inventory on Sunday at the train show in Concord, New Hampshire.

Train Time videos were shown continuously throughout the weekend and were available for sale.

Pictures were taken during both days and sent to *Uncle Andy’s Digest* for publication.

As one of the major fund-raisers of the club, the Train Fest was a success because so many members came to help during the two-day event. **Thanks!**



Ken Nettleship, Dave Kierstead, Rita Vatter ↑
↓ Maiya Pelletier & Grandfather Mike Paine



MAINE NARROW GAUGE SHOW

SEPTEMBER 26, 2015

By Paul Lodge

Bob Willard announced that on Saturday, September 26, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. the Maine Narrow Gauge Show will be held at the Gray/New Gloucester High School on the Libby Hill Road off Route 26 in Gray.

This show was originally scheduled for September 19 to be in conjunction with the Maine Model Railroad Tour, but the date of the show had to be changed because of a conflict in scheduling at the high school.

The show will feature dealers, clinics, modular narrow gauge layouts, a White Elephant table, and model contests. This narrow gauge model railroad show has been a popular event in past years and has different features from our Auburn Middle School show in November.

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club will benefit from this train show by selling refreshments.

Admission is \$5 per person with a \$10 maximum per family.

Where Do You Shop?

By Terry King

The recent announcement of the pending closing of Craft Mania in Auburn brings to light a problem that we have had in this country for a long time. Americans will shop wherever they can save a penny. In the Lewiston/Auburn area, we have seen the loss of countless jobs in the shoe and textile industries because of this trend.

This situation has probably generated many articles and books, but let's just view the problem within the model railroad community.

Joe Modeler stops in to his local train shop because he wants the latest Atlas HO locomotive. The shop has just the one that he wants. With the help of the shop owner, Joe looks it all over and like what he sees. This loco has all of the bells and whistles. The price is \$189.95. Now Joe is a frugal person; in fact, some people have called him cheap. He knows that he can go to Crazy Charlie's online train shop and buy the same item for \$149.95 and that is what he does.

After ordering the loco online, Joe sits back and smiles in satisfaction. He just saved \$40.00! If that local shop owner had been willing to match or almost match Crazy Charlie's price, he would have bought it there. He thinks that the shop owner has about a 50% to 65% markup and could have easily matched the price.

The next day Joe is working on his layout and runs out of rail connectors. He knows that he is also getting low on a few colors of paint, and he could use some more ACC glue. So Joe heads back to the same local train shop to purchase these few items. It doesn't occur to him that if his local train shop wasn't there he would have had to order these small items online and wait for them. With shipping and handling charges, they would have cost a lot more.

Now let's look at the above three paragraphs.

When Joe was at his local train shop looking at the loco, the shop owner spent almost half an hour with him. He showed Joe all of its features and even let him test it. The shop owner did this in a shop for which he has to pay a large monthly rent, the electricity bill that powers the lights and the air conditioner, and heating bills in the winter time. The shop owner's mark-up is between 15% and 40%. In fact, he feels lucky if he gets 40% for an item.

If Joe had purchased the loco there and had a problem with it, the shop owner would have either taken it back or showed him how to fix the problem. Would the online store have done that?

Do you shop locally at your local hobby or craft store, appliance store, hardware store or book store? You

may pay a little more up front, but in the long term you are supporting the local economy. This means jobs for your neighbors. It also means that this local shop will stay in business and maybe even grow and be able to lower their prices because they will be able to buy in larger quantities.

If you are like Joe, please stop and think about this idea.

Remember, the few extra dollars you spend to buy locally today may help to save your local store!

GREENE VILLAGE DAY

SEPTEMBER 12, 2015

By Paul Lodge

Greene Village Day is an annual September celebration, featuring a parade on Main Street and day-long activities. Dick Clark always invites all club members to attend the open house at his outdoor garden railroad during Greene Village Day to enjoy his layout and to help other guests. We usually bring the raffle layout to his house, and members bring their G-Gauge equipment to run on his layout.

This year, weather permitting, we will enter the club's Parade Locomotive in the parade. The parade theme is the Civil War, and our locomotive is entered in the parade contest because of its historical interest. Our locomotive was originally built with the name on its side of a 20-year-old soldier who died in the war. It is also basically the same type of locomotive as "The General," which was featured in "The Great Locomotive Chase," a movie about an incident involving Confederate and Union soldiers during the Civil War.

We will need four volunteers to move the locomotive and to carry the club banner in front of the train. We hope many club members will come to watch the parade, participate in the activities, and share the camaraderie at Dick Clark's open house at 23 Barrel Shop Road in Greene.

AIR BRUSHING CLINIC

OCTOBER 22, 2015

By Paul Lodge

At its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, October 22, from 7 to 9 p.m., the Modelers Forum will present a clinic on air brushing. A survey last spring indicated that many club members want to know more about air brushing. All club members are invited to attend this clinic and as many other Forum meetings as you can.

Different types of equipment and paints will be displayed and discussed. Demonstrations are planned, and "hands-on" experience will be available for those who wish to give it a try. The presenters will be Bob Willard, Gary Thibeault, and Darin Long.

August Minutes by Paul Lodge



MEETING MINUTES OF

AUGUST 20, 2015

A Power Point slide show of club activities in July and August was shown from 6:45 to 7:00 p.m.

In the absence of President Jay Calnan, Tom Coulombe 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.

As Station Master, Tom Coulombe reported that there is a plan to paint the walls in the hall and meeting room and to clean the floors upstairs and put polyurethane them. The molding around the doors on the upper level has been installed and painted. As money becomes available, additional security cameras will be added to the outside of the building. The speeder which was donated to the club by Mike Reed was recently vandalized with graffiti. Terry King cleaned off as much of the paint as possible and suggested having the speeder waxed.

Librarian and Archivist Terry King reported that the 2016 calendar will be ready for purchase at the September meeting. A copy of the calendar was circulated so that members could see it. Club members will be able to buy a calendar for \$12; non-members will pay \$15.

Terry also reported that some club members have utilized the library by borrowing books, magazines, or videos. He says that about three quarters of the books have never been taken out. He also reported that some new books have been donated recently.

Jim Vatter reported that the HO Division is planning to implement a car card system for moving freight and passenger cars during operating sessions. He noted that he still has cars without cards and cards without cars. Individuals who have personal cars on the layout will need to provide cards for their cars and locomotives. Part of the layout has been "signaled" and additional signals are planned for other areas. Gary Thibeault has done a magnificent job of installing dispatcher controls for the helix.

Jim Vatter acknowledged that there has been some interest in having an operating session for adults only. Tom Coulombe asked for a show of hands as to how many would be interested in an adult-only operating session. About ten members raised their hands. A Sunday after a Saturday operating session will be chosen because the layout will still be set up for operating from the previous day.

The G-Gauge Division reported that they are stand-

ardizing wheels and couplers on the rolling stock and locomotives.

Bob Willard reported that the Modelers Forum will meet on August 27. They plan to discuss modeling with plastic and creating sidewalks and stone walls. A special clinic for teaching air brushing will be held at the October 22nd meeting of the Modelers Forum. Gary Thibeault, Darin Long, and Bob Willard will be the air brush presenters. Bob also reminded members of the "Outhouse Challenge." The "People's Choice" award will be based on outhouse models submitted for our train show at the Auburn Middle School on Saturday, November 7.

The Maine Narrow Gauge show will be held at Gray/New Gloucester High School on Saturday, September 26, instead of September 19 as previously announced. There will be many clinics and modeling contests which will add interest to the event. (See separate article.)

On September 19 and 20, layout tours will take place around the state. (See a related article elsewhere in the newsletter.) People are asked to sign up for the tour through an interactive registration form online. On September 19 from 1 to 5 p.m., the club layouts will be part of the tour. Club members are asked to come and help greet guests and show off the layouts.

As part of the club's "Cottage Industry" idea, Rita Vatter displayed railroad-themed pillow cases and knitted hats with train designs on them. She plans to sell them at the Train Fest and future club activities.

Paul Lodge noted that monthly pledges which have been made for the Utility Team can be paid at any time. Treasurer Tom Coulombe said that the money is especially appreciated during months when there are no money-making club activities. Our Auburn Adult Education class in Model Railroading will start on Tuesday, September 1. Club members are invited to come and help present the class. Paul also asked for help in showing the Parade Train to be used in the Balloon Festival Parade on Saturday, August 22. Tami and Mike Paine, Dan Malkowski and Tom Coulombe volunteered. (Ed. Note: Because of the inclement weather, the Parade Train did not participate in the parade.)

For the "Thinking Out of the Boxcar" portion of the meeting, Nick Mamich offered to present a clinic, using his electrical knowledge to produce an atmosphere of "moonlight" or lighting. He has since started working on the thunderstorm section of the HO layout.

Dick Holman showed "What's on Your Workbench?" He displayed some "Above-Ground" manhole covers which were requested by Travis Johnson for the new module he is making. Dick also showed the molds he created from which

he made the items. Dick's most impressive project was creating an intricate 4-wheel, all-terrain vehicle with a driver on it. He explained the clever way in which he created the mold for this project. He presented to Paul Lodge four completed and painted ATVs which can be used for Operation Lifesaver railroad safety presentations.

To finish the meeting, the 50/50 raffle winner was drawn. Darin Long won the raffle. Tami Paine won the Attendance Prize and took one of the railroad-themed cups.

The meeting adjourned.

2016 CALENDAR IS READY

By Paul Lodge

Another first for the club. The club's 2016 calendar is in publication and will be available to purchase at our September 17 monthly meeting. The calendar features the club's activities month by month. Those who have a hard time remembering all the dates and times of the many events in which we participate will have the monthly reminders right on their calendar. All the calendar pictures except one have been chosen from the club's slide collection. Terry King has accomplished the major undertaking of designing and producing the calendar as well as selling most of the ads.

The calendars will be printed on the club's computer. Several members have donated enough money to purchase a spiral binding machine to complete this project.

Club members will be able to purchase the calendar for \$12; non-members will pay \$15. Publicity ads were sold at \$25 each to help offset the cost of printing. The following businesses will have their advertising in our calendar: Ray & Robins Hobby Center, Norm's O Scale Trains, NMRA's Seacoast Division, L-A Harley-Davidson, Governor's Restaurant & Bakery, Simones Hot Dog Stand, The Hobo Line, The 36th National Narrow Gauge Convention, and Rolly's Diner & Catering. Three of these advertisers, Ray & Robins Hobby Center, Norm's O Scale Trains, and Rolly's Diner will also sell the calendars in their establishments.

These calendars will make great Christmas gifts for members and for parents who regularly attend club activities with their families.

TRAIN TIME SCHEDULE CHANGE

By Paul Lodge

TRAIN TIME, the TV show produced by the Great Falls Model Railroad Club, has a new time slot. Time Warner Cable Channel 9 will now show *TRAIN TIME* on Mondays at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

SHRINERS INVITED TO CLUB

By Paul Lodge

The Kora Shriners of Lewiston will host the 2015 Northeast Shrine Association Fall Field Days on September 17 through 20 with more than 2,000 Shriners from 14 different Shrine centers in Canada and New England.

The Chamber of Commerce has listed the Shriners free events to which the public is invited. We hope many of our club members will enjoy some or all of these.

The Shriners opening ceremony on Thursday, September 17, starts at 5:30 at Veterans Memorial Park, 2 Main Street by the Longley Bridge in Lewiston. Local officials will be among those addressing the crowd.

Friday, September 18, is an open day for all attendees. We have invited the Shriners to visit our club and enjoy our displays. This spring an advance committee received copies of our club's brochure. GFMRRRC members are invited to come to the club on Friday any time from 9:00 to 4:00 to greet visitors and help operate the layouts.

On September 18, the Kora Shrine Temple will be open to the public for guided tours from noon to 4:00 p.m. If you have never attended their November FEZtival of Trees, now is a good time to see the inside of this remarkable building at 11 Sabattus Street, diagonally opposite Central Maine Medical Center.

On Saturday morning, September 19, the public is invited to watch two major Shriener competitions at the Auburn Mall: the Motorized Unit Competition, with an obstacle course and special routines, from 7:00 a.m. until noon in the front of the J. C. Penney parking lot; and the Clown Competition, including comedy skits and balloon character making, from 9:00 a.m. until noon at Center Court in the Mall.

A Northeast Shrine Music Concert with a variety of music will take place in Lewiston from 9:00 a.m. until noon at Dufresne Plaza, 72 Lisbon Street (near the main branch of Androscoggin Savings Bank).

The huge Shriners Parade from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. will start at the Public Works lot on Canal Street in Lewiston and end at the Kora Shrine Temple on Sabattus Street.

RETIRED RENOVATORS STARTING AGAIN

By Paul Lodge

After taking the summer off, the Retired Renovators group has started meeting again on Tuesday mornings from 9 to 11. The group will be restoring buildings, rolling stock, and locomotives for sale at club events. Many of the items we receive in donations need fixing up in order to be able to sell them. The Retired Renovators learn new skills and help the club's treasury by upgrading our sales stock. Everyone is invited to come, learn, and share modeling skills and techniques.



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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www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org or www.gfmrrc.com

Upcoming Events



September 1 – Model Railroading

Class 6:30 – 8:30

September 8 Executive Committee Meeting

6:30 p.m.

September 12 – Greene Village Day Dick

Clark's Garden Railroad

September 17 – Regular monthly club meeting

6:45

September 18 – Shriners Northeast visit club

September 19 – HO Operating Session

8:00 a.m. to noon

September 19 - Maine Model Railroad Tour at GFMRRC and at some members' home layouts, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (See article, p. 1)

September 26 - Maine Narrow Gauge Show, Gray/New Gloucester High School, 9 to 3

October 3 - HO Operating Session, 8:00 a.m. to noon

October 3 - Future Master Model Rail roaders, 12 to 1 p.m.

October 10 Executive Committee

Meeting 6:30 p.m.

October 15 – Regular monthly club

meeting 6:45

October 17 – HO Operating Session

8:00 a.m. to noon

October 22 - Modelers Forum, Air

Brushing Clinic, 7 to 9 p.m.

NOTE: Retired Renovators meet every Tuesday morning from 9:00 to 11:00 to restore and upgrade trains and buildings.

NOTE: Model Railroading Class starts September 1 and continues every Tuesday night for 8 weeks from 6:30 to 8:30

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

FALL SEMESTER'S

MODEL RAILROADING CLASS

By Paul Lodge

The Model Railroading Adult Education class has 14 participants, including 3 couples and three youngsters with their parents. They come from Saco, Vassalboro, Belgrade, and Lewiston. Some club members are also taking the class. There is a wide variety of modeling skills represented by the group this time. They will be making about six new modules for our show at the Auburn Middle School on Saturday, November 7.

We need club members to come and help the new class build their modules on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30.