



The Signal

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club



VOLUME 18. ISSUE 7

DECEMBER 2015



Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING
December 17
6:45 p.m.

NEXT MONTH
Deadline for
January Issue
January 1, 2016

MEMBERSHIP
127

ATTENDANCE PRIZE

Carl Butland
won the Attendance
Prize.

Maybe next meeting
it will be YOU!

Will your name be
drawn on

December 19?
You have to be

BOTTLES FOR BASICS

- ◆ Total LAST YEAR
- ◆ \$700.23
- ◆ YEAR TO DATE:
- ◆ \$490.00
- ◆ Last MONTH:
- ◆ \$79.00

Donations of Used
Ink and Toner
Cartridges:
Last Month: \$8.00
Year to Date:
\$155.00



SEVENTH ANNUAL Ex TRAIN aganza

By Paul Lodge



The seventh annual ExTRAINaganza was held at the club for four days on the weekends before and after Thanksgiving. More than fifty club members came to help or support this major club event. Almost 450 adults attended the four days of the ExTRAINaganza, and about 285 children put their names on our *Train Tree*.

Thomas the Tank Engine and his friends are always a highlight with our youngest visitors. Although Thomas needed to rest for nearly three days, Percy kept running on top of the colorful trestle. Many children had fun pushing the button and watching the new waterwheel turn. Children enjoyed putting their names on the *Train Tree*, playing with the trains on the wooden Brio layout and in the younger children's play area, creating ornaments, decorating cookies to eat, and watching trains on all the layouts and under the Christmas trees.

Bob Willard set up his On30 point-to-point layout in the classroom area of the lower level, and Gregg Ouellette came to help operate it. Parents who were waiting for their children to run trains as HO Guest Engineers were impressed with the detailed scenery on the On30 layout.

About 750 tickets were sold and used for the games, crafts, and Guest Engineers. Almost 200 Guest Engineers had an opportunity to run a train on the large HO layout. In the craft area, children decorated and ate more than 230 gingerbread and sugar cookies made by club members and friends. Other crafts included decorating spice ornaments with glitter glue and creating tri-bead candy canes and snowmen to hang on their Christmas trees at home. About 100 ornaments were created or decorated. Operation Lifesaver coloring books and activity books were given away.

Joseph Gilbert brought a small battery-powered "ride-on" locomotive on which little children could ride. About 100 children had an opportunity to ride the locomotive. Joseph thought the younger, smaller children would enjoy it as much as he did when he was small, and it proved to be one of the most popular features of the ExTRAINaganza. After the event was over, Joseph got permission from his parents to donate the locomotive and track to the club. Because of Joseph's generosity, this attraction will be available for future club events.



Terry King and his helpers at the Company Store sold many surplus inventory items, including train sets that the Retired Renovators had made up from surplus inventory and which they had upgraded. The sales crew also sold a variety of merchandise including books, clothing, and a large number of locomotive and caboose cookie cutters.

During the four days of the event, many club members wore their club vests or special club shirts, including the ExTRAINaganza and Spikey T-shirts.

Several club members and friends decorated the building and Christmas trees on Tuesday, No-

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MEET THE MEMBERS

Bryce Weeks

Bryce Weeks is a freshman at Gardiner Area High School, where his favorite subject is science. He lives in West Gardiner with his parents. He has two older sisters, Taylor and Ashley.



His interest in trains began in 2005 when his grandfather introduced him to the Waterville, Wiscasset and Farmington Railway. Like his grandfather before him, Bryce is an active volunteer with the WW&F, laying track and ballast, and helping wherever he is needed. He is currently training to be a brakeman on the WW&F. If you visit the WW&F for the free Victorian Christmas train rides on December 19, you may see him working there.

After his grandfather died in 2009, Bryce and his grandmother Nancy Weeks signed up for the Adult Education class in Model Railroading at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club. Bryce remembers that he and Nancy became members of the club at the 2009 ExTRAINaganza. Since then, Bryce has often participated in the class, usually helping others who are building their first or second module. He sometimes takes his own module to add to the club layout at railroad shows. Instead of a layout of his own at home, he still has the O-scale oval with a switch and siding that he had when he was younger.

Bryce is at the club whenever he can be here, operating trains or helping with the special events. Since joining the club, he has helped with every ExTRAINaganza, Hobo Holiday, and Train Fest. His favorite is the HO layout, but he can fill in whenever needed on the n-scale, z-scale, and G-gauge layouts. Although the afternoon hours for setting up for train shows usually conflict with his school schedule, Bryce is nearly always there to run trains, answer visitors' questions, and help set up and take down layouts on the day of the show. He has helped regularly with train shows at Mt. Ararat High School, Auburn Middle School, the Auburn Mall, and the Maine State Museum in Augusta. For the past three years, he and Nancy have been among the small group of GFMRRC volunteers setting up and operating the train displays at the Santa Movie and Train Night, where he will be again on December 11.

Bryce was one of the first members of the GFMRRC Future Master Model Railroaders Committee. He mentioned that he was even there when Travis Johnson and Nancy Weeks were discussing the original plans for the group.

Another contribution Bryce has made to the club is bringing the special food he has cooked for the club members who help at special events. His blueberry muffins and custard pies are delicious! He also makes a special breakfast treat

called "strata" for an occasional Operating Session at the club.

When asked what were his favorite things about the railroad club, he was quick to reply that everyone is so friendly; and when you need help, you can count on members to answer any questions you may have.

2016 CALENDAR

By Paul Lodge

The club's 2016 calendar is available to purchase and would make an excellent Christmas gift for club members and their families. 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 designed the calendar and sold most of the ads. He is printing the calendars in small batches on the club's computer and using the club's recently purchased spiral binding machine to complete the 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 are advertising in our calendar: Ray & Robin's 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. Calendars may be purchased at the club's Company Store or from three of the advertisers: Ray & Robin's Hobby Center, Norm's O Scale Trains, and Rolly's Diner.



(Continued from page 1)

ember 17. Under three of the trees, trains were operating for a special raffle. Each of these train sets included a locomotive, caboose, three freight cars, track, and a power pack. On Saturday, November 28, the last day of the event, drawings were held for these train sets and the club's HO raffle layout. The Thomas the Tank Engine set was won by Mike Williams, who came back to the club with his sons Simon and Tanner to pick it up. Jacob Chambers won the Santa Fe HO train set and picked it up at the club on Monday. Lisa Gilbert won the other HO set and her family picked it up as the ExTRAINaganza was ending. The club's HO raffle layout was won by Sarah Card of Lewiston and was delivered to her home on Monday, November 30.

Many of those in attendance come to our events every year, but many others were visiting for the first time.

When asked how they knew about our event, many people said they saw the signs which Jerry Johnston and Ed Webb had put out. A photo of Calvin Ames by Daryn Slover, which appeared on the front page of the second section of the Lewiston *Sun/Journal* on the last day of the ExTRAINaganza, helped us finish strong. Lewiston/Auburn's *Twin City Times* also gave us good front-page publicity. Some of those who came to the event mentioned seeing the message on local cable television, our website, or Facebook. Some guests had received free passes from either the Auburn Public Library or Governor's Restaurant.

Governor's Restaurant and Bakery not only distributed free passes and publicized the event with our handouts and large display sign but also donated chocolate chip cookies. On Saturday, November 28, the last day of the ExTRAINaganza, about twenty club members went to Governor's for the traditional "after-event" meal and idea sharing.

The success of the seventh annual ExTRAINaganza is due to all the club members and friends who helped and supported this event. Thank you.



MODEL RAILROAD CLINIC BOOKS

By Terry King

I have only attended one convention of the National Model Railroad Association. That was in 1995 in Atlanta, Georgia.

The clinics there were interesting and very helpful, but you never have the time to see them all. Knowing this, each year the NMRA publishes a book of the clinics. In 1995 that book was titled *Trains Tradition and Technology*. The book was compiled by Ned Spiller and covers all 37 clinics that were held that year. These clinics vary from Operation Lifesaver to scenery, electronics, track, taking great pictures, backdrop painting, bridges, buildings, weathering, kitbashing, and on and on.

If you can think of a subject, it probably has been covered by clinics at more than one convention. In addition, these clinics are presented by people whose names you might recognize from reading model railroad magazines, including Dean Fretag, Robert Hubbard, Toney Koster, Randy Lee, Pete Moffett, Earl Smallshaw, Hal Carstens, Lou Sassi and many more. You might not be familiar with the names of the rest of the presenters, but they are all very skilled modelers.

The GFMRRRC library has the following convention books: *The Clinics at Valley Forge, 1993*; *The Clinics at Portland (OR) 1994*; *Cincinnati Limited 2005 Clinic Book*; and *The Clinics at Ft. Lauderdale, 2002*. **Not one of these books has ever been checked out!**

These books and many others in our library can help you improve your modeling skills and help you research your favorite railroad. Remember, as a member you can check out one or more books for thirty days.

I am usually in the building Monday through Saturday from at least 9:00 to noon. My cell phone number is 576-3788, so can call to make sure that I am at the club before you leave home.

Joseph Gilbert's "ride-on" train was the surprise hit of the ExTRAINaganza.



November Minutes by Paul Lodge



MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 19, 2015

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

The evening's *TRAIN TIME* show featured the hump yard in Selkirk, New York.

Two visitors were introduced. Larry Cyr, one of our new members, is an N- and HO-scale modeler who displayed his coffee table layout at the show at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham. Kevin Lamarre is an HO modeler who works at Scott Paper Company in Winslow and likes to railfan in the Waterville area.

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*.

Tom Coulombe gave the Treasurer's Report and noted that we netted almost \$5,500 at the Mt. Ararat High School Train Show in Topsham on November 7. This was a pleasant surprise because we had to change the location from Auburn to Topsham on short notice.

As Station Master, Tom Coulombe reported that the broken, ice-damaged outdoor siding has been replaced, and painting inside the building continues. Plexiglas was purchased from Portland Glass in Brunswick and affixed to the club speeder donated by Mike Reed. The Plexiglas will protect the inside of the speeder from winter snow and rain.

Terry King, librarian, made an appeal for club members to buy the 2016 club calendar which lists the dates for our monthly activities and special events. He noted that the library's 14,000-slide collection includes slides of Amtrak. There are also cassettes with about 100 slides each and a spreadsheet of information about the slides. A few duplicate slides are available for sale.

The G-Gauge Division has been selling surplus assets on Ebay and using the proceeds to upgrade the Thomas the Tank Engine part of the G-Gauge exhibit.

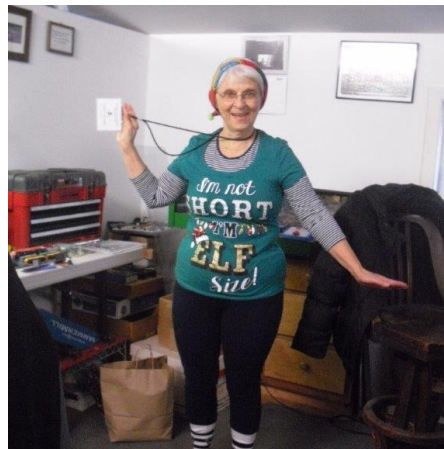
The HO Division is continuing to have Wednesday evening and Saturday morning work sessions. The group is working on installing signals in Obie Yard and controlling turnouts and signals from the yard. Areas of the HO layout which are creating poor operating quality will have the main line rail changed from Code 83 to Code 100. The HO Division has adopted the new "Standards and Practices" for operators of the layout. A new internal phone system is being planned. A 16-line system with automated exchanges will be purchased with donations from the members.

Bob Willard reported on the "Outhouse Challenge" voting at the train show in Mt. Ararat. He is looking into the possibility of a diorama project for the next challenge. He invited club members to come to the Modelers' Forum on the fourth Thursday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. Because of Christmas, the group will meet during the Executive Committee Meeting on the second Thursday in December.

Paul Lodge announced the possibility of using the Norway Savings Bank arena in Auburn for a show in the spring. More information needs to be gathered before a final decision can be made.

The 50/50 Raffle was won by Gary Thibeault. Carl Butland won the Attendance Prize and selected a Central Maine & Quebec coffee mug.

The meeting adjourned.



Carmen Coulombe's shirt says, "I'm not short. I'm Elf Size."

Tami Paine brought her guitar. She played and sang Christmas songs when the craft table wasn't busy.



DECEMBER MEETING CHRISTMAS PARTY

By Paul Lodge

Traditionally our December club meeting is a pot-luck Christmas Party to which club members' friends and relatives are invited. We usually have a brief business meeting and then we socialize and share the variety of foods which have been brought by the members.

Paul Lodge always asks that **CHOCOLATE** be considered as part of the pot-luck dessert because of its sweet relationship with the season. Of course, it's good in any season. (Because not everyone can eat chocolate, however, we are glad that not everyone brings chocolate.)

This year many of the Christmas decorations have been removed in order to make room for tables for the Surplus Inventory Sale on Saturday, December 12.



The Thomas the Tank Engine set under the tree was won by Mike Williams and his sons, Tanner and Simon.

SECOND ANNUAL SURPLUS INVENTORY SALE

By Paul Lodge

On Saturday, December 12, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. the Great Falls Model Railroad Club is holding its second annual "Surplus Inventory Sale." Club members and the general public are invited to come and buy items which are not usually available at shows. The size of the club's truck limits the amount of inventory we can take to shows, so this is a good opportunity to choose from a wide selection.

About a dozen tables will be stocked with items ranging from N-Scale to G-Gauge. Buildings and rolling stock which has been restored by the Retired Renovators will also be available. Because this is the Christmas season, there will also be train sets which we have made up from our surplus inventory stock. Many structure kits have never been built. In the Company Store there will also be a wide variety of items from which to choose, including clothing, books, cookie cutters, hats, whistles, stocking stuffers, and more locomotives and rolling stock.





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THE SIGNAL

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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.

Address Change

If your mailing or e-mail address changes please notify Terrence King at tpking@roadrunner.com

www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org or www.gfmrrc.com

Upcoming Events



December 10 – Modelers Forum
7:00 p.m.

Special day because of holidays

December 10 Executive Committee Meeting 6:30 p.m.

December 12 – Surplus Inventory Sale 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

December 17 – Regular monthly club meeting and Club Christmas party 6:45

December 19 – HO Operating Session

September 7-10, 2016,

36th National Narrow Gauge Convention
at Augusta, Me.



Bryce Weeks setting up for Mt. Ararat November Show