



Members since June 1988

# The Signal



December Edition  
2016



Signal indicates **STOP AT OUR NEXT MEETING**  
**December 15, 2016 6:45**

Notice: Christmas Pot Luck Supper @ 12/15 meeting!!!

### Involve friends & relatives

Meetings demonstrate how hobbies impart the trades.

Fabrication — Detailing — Electricity

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.”

- Benjamin Franklin

### Have a story you want to share?

Share your account at the meeting!

Or publish it in our newsletter!  
Let us know by December 23, 2016  
Email secretary Paul Lodge  
See back page for contact info . . .

### Do you want to win

### Attendance & 50/50 prizes?

Don't let somebody else score a brass locomotive with the cash from the winning prize!

You must be present to win!

### DONATIONS . . .

#### Bottles for Basics (B4B)

Total Last Year \$ 814.00

**YTD \$468.00**

Last month: \$ 88.00

#### Used Printer Cartridges

Last month: \$ 84.00

YTD: \$ 154.00

#### Why donate to Great Falls?

- Donations help keep dues low.  
**Low dues = More members.**
- Your donations are a perfect way to **expedite your winter cleaning!**
- **Save time and effort** with our bottle dropoff; Avoid waiting in line at a redemption center!



Thomas the Tank Engine and his friends are always a highlight with our youngest visitors. Many children had fun pushing the button and watching the waterwheel turn. A new feature this year is the push button that allows children to make the sound of a loud diesel or steam engine whistle. In the meeting room children relived another train sound by ringing the bell fastened to the wall.

Children enjoyed putting their names on the Train Tree, playing with the trains in the younger children's play area and on the wooden Brio layout, creating ornaments, decorating cookies to eat, and watching trains on all the layouts and under the Christmas trees. On the lower level, the large painting of Harry Potter's Hogwarts Express locomotive was used as a backdrop where children and adults had their pictures taken.

About 825 tickets were sold and used for the games, crafts, and Guest Engineers. More than 190 Guest Engineers had an opportunity to run a train on the large HO layout. In the craft area, children decorated and ate more than 160 gingerbread cookies made by Frances Lodge's sister **Beverly Spofford** and sugar cookies made by **Nancy Weeks**. **Rick James** made the frosting that was used to decorate the cookies. Crafts included decorating spice ornaments with glitter glue and creating tri-bead candy canes and snowmen to hang on their Christmas trees at



## EIGHTH ANNUAL ExTRAINaganza BEST YET !!!

The eighth annual ExTRAINaganza was held at the club for four days on the weekends before and after Thanksgiving. More than thirty club members came to help or support this major club event. About 465 adults attended the four days of the ExTRAINaganza, and about 250 children put their names on our Train Tree. Over half of the adults said this was the first time they had been to the club.

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home. About 115 Christmas tree ornaments were created or decorated. While children were working on the crafts, parents enjoyed watching Train Time shows which were available for sale and were shown on the television near the crafts and play area. Operation Lifesaver coloring books were given away.

Last year **Joseph Gilbert** donated a small battery-powered

“ride-on” locomotive on which little children could ride. Joseph thought the younger, smaller children would enjoy it as much as he did when he was small. It proved to be one of the most popular features of the ExTRAINaganza, with some children riding several times and a total of 150 tickets collected. **Dick Clark** had improved the battery system, and **Joe Landry** had donated another battery to be used as a backup in case one died during the days of the ExTRAINaganza.

Visitors were impressed with the many changes in the n-scale room, including the railroad-themed “skirts” donated by Wally Chase and adapted by **Julie Hayes**. Future Master Model Railroaders **Benton Hayes**, **Bryce Weeks**, and **Dan Malkowski** kept the n-scale trains running smoothly throughout the ExTRAINaganza.

**Rita Vatter** had volunteered to sell Cottage Industry items at a special table set up at the entrance to the Company Store. **Terry Obie** donated Christmas ornaments she had created and several items she had knit, including mittens and slippers. **Tami Paine's** train earrings had been sold at our train shows and in the Company Store as well as at the Cottage Industry table. Rita Vatter's contributions included catnip toys representing mice, many of which were made from railroad-themed fabrics. Many other club members had also created items that were sold at the Cottage Industry table. About \$250 was received from these specialty items sold at the





Member  
#076805 00  
Since 1988

## EIGHTH ANNUAL ExTRAINaganza (Con't)

craft table.

**Terry King** and his helpers at the Company Store sold almost \$600 worth of surplus inventory items, including buildings and model train items which the Retired Renovators had upgraded and a variety of other merchandise including books, clothing, and a large number of locomotive and caboose cookie cutters.



Several club members decorated the building and Christmas trees on Monday and Tuesday, November 14 and 15. Under two of the trees, trains were operating for a special raffle, a Lionel train set and another with Thomas the Tank engine and Friends. The third Christmas tree raffle had a large stuffed Teddy Bear holding a \$25 gift certificate donated by Governor's Restaurant in Lewiston. On Saturday, November 26, the last day of the event, drawings were held for these train sets and for the club's HO raffle layout. The Lionel Train set was won by **Bob Ouellette**, Thomas train set by **Jerry Winslow**, and the Teddy Bear and Governor's Restaurant \$25 gift certificate by **Tim DeRoche**. The club's raffle layout was won by **Loni White**.

Santa Claus made a special appearance on Saturday afternoon, to the delight of all the children who were there.

**Jerry Johnston** and **Nancy Weeks** organized the kitchen and prepared food for the club members who were helping so they would not have to leave the building. Some food was also donated by other club

members, including those who could not stay at the event.

When asked how they knew about the ExTRAINaganza, many people said they saw the signs which Jerry Johnston, Ed Webb, and **Travis Johnson** had put out. Others mentioned seeing the message on local cable television, our website, or Facebook. Some guests had received free passes at our Topsham show or from club members, the **Auburn Public Library**, or **Governor's Restaurant**. Lewiston/Auburn's Twin City Times gave us good front-page publicity on Thursday, November 17. A photo taken on Sunday by **Daryn Slover** appeared on the front page of the Lewiston Sun/Journal on Monday and helped with attendance on the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving.

Governor's Restaurant and Bakery not only distributed free passes and publicized the event with our handouts and large display sign but also donated four dozen chocolate chip cookies for us to sell. On Saturday, November 26, the last day of the ExTRAINaganza, about fifteen club members went to Governor's for the traditional "after-event" meal to relax, socialize, share ideas, and hear the results from the four days.

During the event, many club members wore their club vests or special club shirts, including the ExTRAINaganza and Spike T-shirts.

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



Come share  
your projects  
at our  
Modeler's Forum



Thank you!

- Paul Lodge



## MEETING MINUTES OF November 17, 2016

### Christmas Party During 12/15 December meeting



A Power Point slide show of club activities in October and November was shown from 6:45 to 7:15 p.m.

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

**Owen Buck** presented the Treasurer's Report, which included an explanation about the pay-down on the building mortgage. The report was approved as given.

Jerry Johnston gave a Power Point presentation for "What's on Your Boxcar Workbench?" The program showed the workbenches of about a dozen members. Those in attendance were asked to guess which club member's workbench was being shown.

**Ken Nettleship** presented to President Jerry Johnston a G-gauge boxcar in appreciation for his work and support of the club. The boxcar is one of a limited run of fifty Garden Craft boxcars designed and lettered for the 1999 Hobo Weekend. The car will be a new addition to the G-gauge layout at the club.

New members **Jerry Ross and Dexter Baum** were asked to introduce themselves. They are from Buxton and Westbrook respectively.

The Executive Committee Report for November 10 was read and included some of the following items:

**Terry King** reported that **Larry Cannon** is painting and decaling a Cushman Bread Truck. This was a southern Maine staple from the 1930s through the 1950s. A price of \$15 each has been set as an initial offer. For more information, contact Terry or Larry.



At a special Executive Committee meeting on November 1, it was decided to retire the club truck and rent a U Haul truck for each of the three shows we have during the year. The truck will be parked at Jerry Johnston's. Treasurer Owen Buck will cancel the insurance. Before the Augusta show in February, portable module racks need to be designed and built which can be used to carry modules for that show and next year's two shows in Topsham.

Discussion about possible changes in the club's Constitution and By-Laws was tabled for a future meeting.

After some discussion about annual inspection of smoke detectors, Terry King made a motion, which passed, to buy one CO2 detector.

The Modelers Forum meeting for November and the regular meeting for December have been cancelled because of the conflict with Thanksgiving and Christmas. The next meeting of the Forum will be a special meeting on the fifth Thursday in December, December 29.

The Retired Renovators will NOT meet November 22 and 29 but they will meet on December 6 to help set up for the Surplus Assets sale on December 10.

President Johnston again asked for help with snow removal this winter. **Ed Webb** has been appointed snow removal manager and volunteers should contact him to let him know who is going to help. A motion was made, and approved, to waive the membership fee for Ed for taking on this task.

**Rita Vatter** presented a new Cottage Industry product she will sell at the ExTRAINaganza this year. It is a catnip toy designed as a catnip mouse. Rita will set up and supervise a special sales table for Cottage Industry items at the ExTRAINaganza.

**Carmen Coulombe** is an active member of the club, and the club is storing modules, surplus assets, and other items in her barn in Lewiston. A motion was made and accepted to give Carmen an honorary lifetime membership.

Jerry Johnston thanked the Retired Renovators for helping to improve many of the surplus assets so that they can be sold at higher prices and be layout ready when they are purchased. The Retired Renovators also contribute to the club by doing whatever needs to be done to get ready for shows, helping around the building, and working on the layouts.

**Paul Lodge** thanked those club members who helped with Christmas decorations at the clubhouse in preparation for the ExTRAINaganza and for the club's Christmas party on December 15.

At the Christmas party, a Power Point program will be presented featuring pictures of some of the club's history. This is the club's 30th Anniversary and this will show some of the stages of our club's development.

Members were invited to attend the club's third annual Surplus Inventory Sale on Saturday, December 10, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Drawings were made for the 50/50 raffle and the Attendance Prize. **Carmen Anastase** won the 50/50 raffle. **Ed Leslie** won the Attendance Prize and chose a multipurpose tool.

The meeting adjourned.



Traditionally our December club meeting is a pot-luck Christmas Party to which club members' friends and relatives are invited. This year in addition to a brief business meeting, we will have a special look at the 30-year history of the club using a Power Point presentation. After the presentation, we will be able to 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 some people cannot 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 10.

By Paul Lodge



-Paul Lodge

Check out our Facebook page at:

Great Falls Model Railroad Club

For up to date Reports on our Activities...

Visit our web page!

See Facebook page And Web Site for posted pictures of club events

CLUB TRUCK RETIRED

The club truck, donated to GFMRRRC in 2009 by John Marchesseault of West Minot, has been retired. The 1997 Chevrolet model 350 box truck has been used to store and transport about a dozen of the club's show modules for the past six years. The show in Topsham on November 5 was the last show for which the truck will be used. It is currently parked on Jerry Johnston's property and is still being used for storage of the modules.



The reason the truck is being taken off the road is that it could not pass inspection without expensive repairs. Because of a serious rust problem, the cross bracing under the body of the truck needs to be replaced. In order to do that, the body would need to be lifted off the frame. There is a good possibility that lifting the body would break the seal between the body and the cab and create water leakage.

At a special meeting of the Executive Committee, it was decided not to spend the estimated \$2,000 it would cost to repair the truck. We travel less than a thousand miles each year for the three or four train shows in which we participate. The cost of insurance, registration, inspection, service, and any necessary repairs has averaged more than \$1,000 a year. It would be much less expensive to rent a U Haul truck for each show and pay for the mileage than it would be to continue to pay the annual expenses for the club truck.

Portable racks to carry the modules will be designed and built to fit into a standard U Haul truck. Club members interested in helping with this project should contact any of the club officers for additional information. (Officers' names and contact information are listed on the last page of the newsletter.)

By Paul Lodge



Note from the Treasurer

Thanks to the efforts and generosity of many, the Great Falls Model Railroad Club is now financially independent. Strong surplus asset sales, the Topsham show, and the ExTRAINaganza have also been a factor. The mortgage debt is now covered with our own line of credit loan from Mechanics Savings Bank, with an interest rate of prime + 1%. As of November 30, 2016, the club's debt balance is down to just \$14,985. This is an amazing improvement over last year at this time, when our debt was in the vicinity of \$90,000. Our goal of becoming debt-free is in sight!

By Owen Buck

BOTTLES FOR BASICS (B4B) \$88 donated in November!

To help keep everybody warm and help pay for the club's heating bills, members donated \$88 to B2B in November. Those five cent contributions add up when everyone pitches in! Thanks to everyone who has donated bottles to the club and to Jim Vatter & Jerry Johnston for signing up to take them to the bottle redemption recycling center each month.

Donating \$90 worth of bottles per month will meet our goal of setting a new B2B \$1,000 record next year! Meeting this goal will keep Owen Buck, our new treasurer, smiling! Thanks for making B4B a success!



### FORUM COMMENTS

As we come into the colder months of the year, many of us have more time for our hobby. Brenda and I find the Modelers Forum to be one of the highlights of being part of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club. We enjoy getting together with fellow modelers and sharing ideas. Some from the outside may see this as show and tell, but we as modelers see this as show and learn. This is a place to ask,



“What would you do or use?” Whatever someone brings to the table, no matter how simple or complex, has an idea that we may use on our next project.

The club as a whole shares the love of model trains, and everyone has a different aspect of the hobby that sparks their interest. For us, crafting our projects sparks our imagination into hours of delight. We hope more people will join the Modelers Forum this month on a special date, December 29, and join us throughout the next year on the fourth Thursday of each month. Meetings start at 7:00 p.m.

by Ed Leslie



### THE FORUM

On the fourth Thursday of each month from 7 p.m., members of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club meet to share modeling techniques and ideas. Future newsletters will have a “Tip of the Month” submitted by club members who want to share their modeling experiences. All club members are invited to come and learn or share their modeling skills. New model railroaders as well as those with many years of experience have participated in the Modelers Forum.

At the May Forum, fourteen club members shared some outstanding modeling tips and ideas. Some of the presentations will be used as part of the clinic portion of our monthly meetings.

To learn more about Wally Chase and his influence on model railroading in the Lewiston/Auburn area, see the February issue of The Signal.

By Paul Lodge

### TRAIN SHOW IN BREWER

On Saturday, November 19, three members of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club went to Brewer and sold surplus inventory at the Eastern Maine Model Railroad Club’s annual train show. The Brewer show typically conflicts with the first day of our ExTRAINaganza, but **Stephen Martelli, Terry King, and Jerry Johnston** took advantage of the opportunity to sell between \$800 and \$900 worth of our excess supplies. **Travis Bragg**, a club member from Brewer, also helped with the sales.

By Paul Lodge



The Great Falls Model Railroad Club (GFMRRC)

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See us on Facebook!

Great Falls Model Railroad Club

An educational foundation



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The Signal

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GFMRRC Winter Events

Dec 1- Dec 24

**Holiday Train Display by Garden Railway Society at Maine Mall, Portland**

Dec 17 — 9 am to 4 pm

**WW&F, Victorian Christmas, Alna**

Dec 10 & 11 with trains at 11, 11:45, 12:30, 1:15 and 2:00 daily

**North Pole Express Boothbay Railway Village, see**

<http://railwayvillage.org/event/north-pole-express>

Dec 6 — 9 am to 11am

**Retired Renovators**

Dec 10 — 8 am to 5 pm

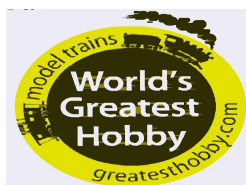
**Surplus Inventory Sale, GFMRRC**

Dec 15 — 6:45 pm

**Club Christmas Party, GFMRRC**

Dec 29 — 7 PM

**Modelers Forum**



GFMRRC Recurrent Activities

Please check web site or Facebook page  
**Note \*\*\* changes for Holiday schedule**

1st Thursday of each month

**Family Night at Governor's Restaurant**  
1185 Lisbon St, Lewiston, ME 04240

2nd Thursday of each month - 6:30 PM

**Executive Committee Meeting**

3rd Thursday of each month - 6:45 PM

**Regular Monthly Club Meeting**

4th Thursday of each month - 7 PM

**Modelers Forum**

**\*\*\* Holiday schedule: 12/29**

Regular schedule resumes January 2017

Tuesday mornings - 9:00 to 11:00 AM.

**\*\*\* Holiday schedule: 12/6**

Meetings resume January 2017

**Retired Renovators.** We meet to restore railroad equipment and buildings donated to the club. This helps to sell excess inventory at higher prices. If you would like to help, come whenever you can.

**HO Work Sessions**

Except for Operating Sessions and special events, work sessions are scheduled:

- Every Saturday 8:00 am to noon
- Every Wednesday 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

**HO Operating Sessions**

All members, first Saturday of every month

