

Member since June 1988

**NEXT MEETING
MARCH 19
6:30 p.m.**

**Have a story
you want to
share?**

**Send it to
the Editor
today and
you may be
published!**

***Bring a friend to our
next meeting.***

DO YOU WANT TO WIN?

Attendance & 50/50 prizes are drawn at every Meeting, on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

**YOU HAVE TO BE
PRESENT TO WIN!**

DONATIONS

Bottles for Basics:

- ◆ 2020— \$144.00
- ◆ January—\$36.00
- ◆ February- \$60.00

PRINTER

CARTRIDGES:

2019—\$547.00
Year to date: 10.00
February \$



THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 24. ISSUE 3

MARCH 2020

CLUB SHIRTS

By Paul Lodge

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club has ordered T-shirts and polo shirts with the club logo on them. The polo shirts will be sold exclusively to club members. Some club members have pre-ordered their shirts, and we have ordered extra shirts to sell in the club's store. We hope they will be available by the April 16 club meeting.

The design on the back of the most recent vest is being duplicated and screen-printed on the back of the T-shirt. A small copy of the same design will be embroidered on the front of the polo shirt. The shirts will be dark blue with white lettering, the same as the vest.

Both the T-shirt and polo shirt are available in adult sizes Small, Medium, Large, XL, 2XL, and 3XL. T-shirts cost \$10 and polo shirts cost \$20. There will be an extra charge of \$5 if you would need us to mail the shirt. The shirts will be sold at the club store. If you did not pre-order a shirt and would like to order one, please send an email to Paul Lodge at paulodge@gwi.net with the size of the shirt or shirts you would like to have. (If you do not have email, Paul's home address is 839 West Minot Road, Minot, ME 04258.)



MEETING MINUTES OF February 20, 2020

By Paul Lodge

Before the meeting began, a video was shown of a Pan Am train filmed by Josh Stevens in the Leeds and Greene area.

Mike Meserve then gave a presentation showing layouts and dealers in January at the Amherst Model Railroad show in West Springfield.

President Mike Meserve opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made and accepted to approve the Secretary's report as published in the *Signal*.

Paul Lodge distributed a codicil form which can be filled out and added to a person's will to indicate how the person wishes his/her model railroad equipment and supplies to be used or distributed.

The club will be ordering polo shirts and T shirts with the club logo on them. In order to purchase the necessary quantity, members were asked to indicate their size and type of shirt on a sign-up sheet which will be used as the basis for an order. We don't want to order too many or too few. A motion was made and approved for the club to pay \$50 for the set-up charge for the embroidery logo which will be added to the polo shirts. No set-up fee is involved for the tee shirts because we will use the logo that we already have on the club vests. Those in attendance voted to charge \$20 for the polo shirts and \$10 for the tee shirts. Club members will be able to sign up at the club or by e-mail. The order will be given to the tee-shirt shop at the beginning of March. We hope they will be available for the train show on April 25 train show at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham.

Owen Buck gave the Treasurer's Report and reported on the revenue received from the recent train show in Augusta. The report was approved as given. Owen made a motion, which was approved, to donate \$250 to the Chip Faulter fund to be used to increase model railroad interest among youngsters.

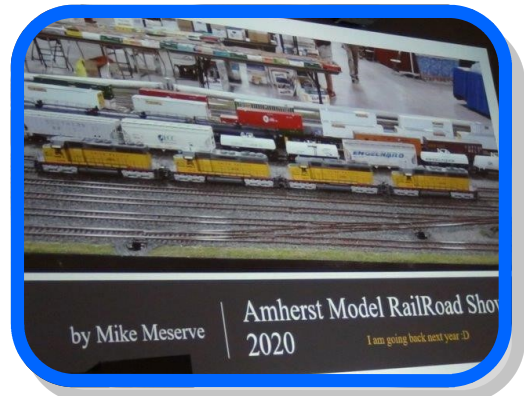
George Pitchard said that no new books have been added to the library. He encouraged members to utilize the library for research or to take out books for personal entertainment.

Jamie Robinson has developed a small yard in the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad area of the HO layout. It was noted that the next operating session (February 22) will be a steam-only session.

Members were invited to view the addition of O-gauge buildings, scenery, and trains donated recently by the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland.

Dick Clark gave a report on one of the changes on the G-gauge layout. On the upper level logging line, two trains will alternate running on the layout with automatic switching for the siding. One train will leave the area, go around the layout, and come to a gradual stop. A switch will then change automatically, and the second train will circle the layout, return and stop. The first train will then take its turn around the layout, and the procedure will be repeated. This will be a nice addition for "wowing" the public.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Attendance Prize was won by Mike Meserve who selected a metal railroad sign. Paul Lodge won the 50/50 raffle.



SPIKEY'S STATION

By Tami Paine

Spikey's Station members have continued working on their square-foot contest entries for the April 25 train show in Topsham and experimenting with creating their water displays for the contest. Each child is also developing his or her own campsite on the Spikey's Station campground module.

On February 15, members of Spikey's Station enjoyed their visit to the Whitefield Lions Club Model Railroad & Dollhouse Show at the Augusta Armory.

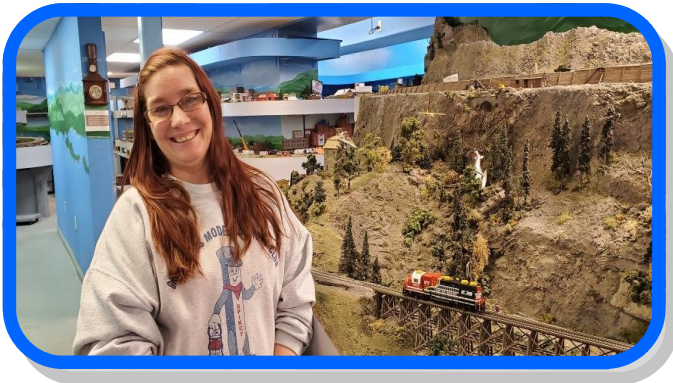
Spikey's Station will hold their regular meetings on March 14 and 28 and on April 11. There will be no meeting at the club on April 25. Instead, we are planning a field trip to the Great Falls Model Railroad Club spring train show at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham.

Spikey's Station meets every other Saturday at the Great Falls Model Railroad Club from 9 to noon. All boys and girls ages 3 to 12 are invited to come as often as they can. See our Facebook page for more details.



TAMI & MIKES LOCOMOTIVE

At a special HO session on February 29, Tami Paine got a wonderful surprise. The HO Crew now has Mike Paine's last purchased locomotive running on the club layout. Darin Long did the work on the EMD GP38 NS First Responders unit. Mike Meserve made sure it had good sound, and it does! Darin actually had to turn it down. Eric Long will finalize the project by putting Mike Paine's name on the locomotive.



HO SCHEDULE

By Darin Long

Just a heads up that the theme for the Operating Session on April 4 will be New England roads. April 18 will be a second Steam Session. At the session on April 4, the theme for June 6 will be picked.

March sessions are open themed and planned for March 7, the normal first Saturday of the month, and on March 21, the Saturday following the March 19 club meeting.

HO Work Sessions will continue every Wednesday evening, beginning at 7 p.m. and on Saturdays when there is no Operating Session scheduled. The only exception is April 25, when the club will be closed for our annual Spring Model Railroad Show at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham.

All HO Operating Sessions are open to GFMRRRC members and to the public.

The HO crew plans to operate only once a month over the summer rather than having a full shutdown of operations for maintenance.



MODELERS FORUM

By Kent Waterson

The Modeler's Forum met on February 27 for a lively evening of information sharing, collaboration and all things modeling. Those attending included Bob Willard, Dick Holman, Dexter Baum, Kent Waterson, Steve Doughty, Paul Lodge, George Pitchard and Jamie Robinson. The group also welcomed newcomer John McMullen.

The theme for the upcoming Square-Foot contest this spring is simply "water." Your entry can be whatever will fit on a 12"x12" base with water as the central theme. The contest entries will be judged at our April 25 Train Show at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham.

To assist in the creation of water, Bob Willard started the sharing of ideas for how to model water. Many techniques are available for representing the clear, glossy surface of water, but perhaps most important is the preparation of what lies below the water's surface. The bottom of the body of water being represented should be painted, and how it's painted may depend on the type of body represented. A deeper body of water would be painted deeper blues and black (with colors becoming lighter near the edges). While a river may also be dark, you can use a brown or even olive-drab green to make it look muddy.

For producing the glossy surface, three basic materials were shared. Perhaps one of the oldest techniques is using one of the various resins that can be poured into a shape to hold the modeled water. These resins work well but may be a bit messy and smelly to deal with, and care needs to be taken to ensure no air bubbles are trapped within the resin. A second method which can be helpful, especially for representing fast-moving water like rapids or waterfalls, is using an acrylic caulking. Some acrylics dry clear while others are a bit more opaque to represent the moving water. The caulk can be shaped, pulled and teased to create the waves or rapids. The caulk can also have cotton batting or fishing line embedded within it to help create the shape of the fast-moving water. The last method is coating the surface with either Mod Podge or an acrylic gel. Both dry clear and the surface can be stippled with a brush, sponge or other instrument to create surface detail.

Bob also presented a short section of a test road he had created using craft foam as the road material (mounted on a piece of 1/4" Masonite). He had drawn cracks with a paint pen and added a centerline stripe with 1/8" pinstripe tape. The entire surface was then blended together with Pan Pastels.

Dexter Baum came to the meeting with a collection of items he was giving away in the process of thinning down his collection. After seeing the collection of fire vehicles George Pitchard had brought last month, Dexter donated to his collection a 1928 Studebaker Fire Truck. He also brought a collection of various metal castings and a tub of various tools for anyone who wanted them. A proper mental picture here might be a pack of wild hyenas descending on a wounded water buffalo. There were no survivors.

Kent Waterson brought a pair of different resin castings for a Kingfisher floatplane float. He is working on a diorama which will use three of these planes/floats. The two different floats were of noticeably different quality. The better one is no longer produced, and Kent sought the advice of the group about ways to duplicate the float by casting in resin. Suggestions were offered, and a later meeting will show the results.

Kent also brought a demo wall-switch faceplate that was 3D printed for his garage train room, which is in the construction phase. The faceplate had the Boston & Maine logo raised on the surface and painted in the respective colors. The group offered further suggestions on a next generation that will also appear at a future meeting.

George Pitchard was up next with continuing progress on a Sandy River Combine that he had shown previously. George had been hung up on forming the roof with the multiple curves. After a period of time thinking of a solution, he formed the roof from two layers of styrene strips. He made the inner layer of 0.015" strips with supports fit to the inner car dimensions and then made the final outer layer with 0.020" strips. The work still to be done is the final sanding of the roof and then covering with a tissue material to simulate the roof.

George also wowed us with a scratch-built On2 front truck for a Sandy River Railbus. The side frames had been punched out with a sharpened screwdriver and springs formed from 0.010" styrene. An impressive bit of work! George had also built a Coupler Height gauge for his On3 models. The gauge works on a flat surface as well as when set on a test track.

Jamie Robinson wrapped up the evening showing a Proto-Throttle he had purchased at Springfield. Jamie was quite pleased with the controller, which should make an appearance at a future HO Operating Session.

The library continues to benefit from the Modelers Forum group as Jamie donated to the club a DVD from the C&O Historical Society and the complete library of the magazine *Mainline Modeler*.

It was a lively session for the evening with a full range of skills on display. There is a wealth of knowledge within the group, but there's always room for more. Come join us next month, March 26. We hope to see you there!



“G” GAUGE UPDATE

By Ray Parent

SUCCESS! Loop 3 on the G-Gauge layout is now running smoothly with two alternating trains on the upper level logging line and automatic switching for the siding. When you turn on the power strip for all three loops, Loop 3 will automatically start up with two trains (coal and lumber) alternating after each loop. The first train will leave the area, go around the layout, and come to a gradual stop. A switch will then change automatically, and the second train will circle the layout, return and stop.

Peter Cole helped to get the alternating system running successfully. His astute observation that the lumber loco's magnet was positioned too high for detection by the reed switches significantly improved the operation! Thanks, Peter.

At another work session in March, the G-Gauge Crew plans to work on several related aspects of the project. During the work session on February 22, the lumber cars kept uncoupling, and the caboose kept derailing. We simplified the lumber train to just one lumber car until Gizmo (Dick Clark) can figure out what needs to be fixed, changed or modified. The Revolution handheld transmitter no longer controls Loop 3. For now, we can just power up Loop 3 and let it run. Some rewiring, including completing the toggle switch wiring, will need to be done in order to maintain the option of running Loop 3 with the Revolution controller. We also need to clean up the wiring behind the layout to be sure it is not so obvious.

Thanks to every member of the G-Gauge Crew for their help!



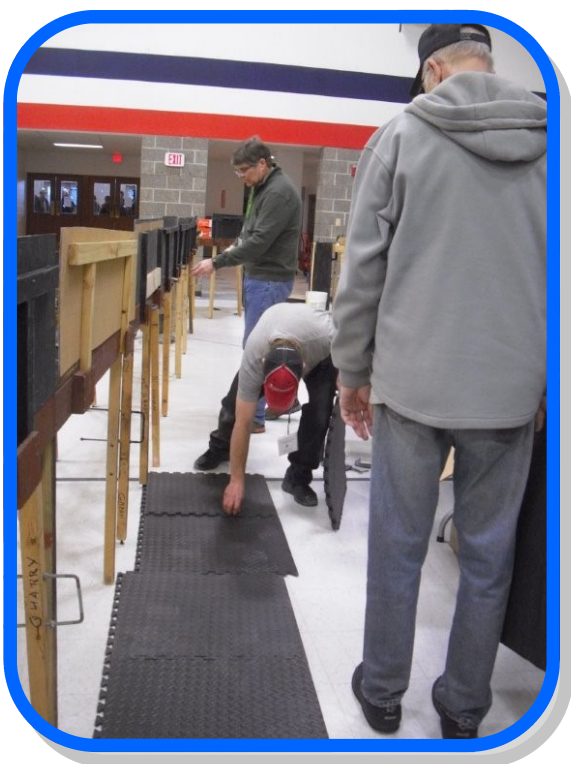
MATS FOR THE CLUB & SHOWS

One of the innovations at the February 15 show in Augusta was the use of floor mats to make standing all day more comfortable for those who were managing the HO layout. Mike Meserve had purchased two boxes of foam exercise mats in 24 by 24 inch interlocking squares. Although only one box of them was needed at the show, the second box will be used downstairs at the club to help with members such as yard masters.

As this is the first time the floor mats had been used, there were a few minor problems which will be much easier to deal with in the future. Travis noted that the mats were a little bit of a headache to get on the truck but that this issue should diminish as time goes on. He felt it took a little bit to get the mats down and usable, but that this will be faster when everyone is used to putting them together. He definitely considered this was mitigated by the way everyone felt at the end of the day.

Guy Lovell commented that he thought the mats were a little difficult to put down, but when all the new corners are finished it should be easier. Overall, he agreed it was easier on everyone's feet.

Mike thought it took very little time to set up the mats because it was only done after the modules had been setup and connected. The mats were fully set up inside with some extras, and the system worked very well. Mike said, "For me personally, my feet did not burn as they usually do after a show and this helped me quite a bit." The mats will be used at all future shows without question.



THE AUGUSTA TRAIN SHOW FEBRUARY 15, 2020

By Paul Lodge

Many members of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club helped with our modular display and sales tables at the Whitefield Lions Club Dollhouse and Train Show at the Augusta Armory on Saturday, February 15. During the 30 years that we have participated in this show, we have connected with old friends and made many new contacts. Again this year, some of them have joined the club as a result of meeting us there.

The club has displayed different modular layouts at the show each year, including many modules that were built by people in our Adult Education Model Railroad Classes and recently renovated recently by club members.

Sales of surplus assets at this show and others help pay the expenses of the club. Terry King and Larry Cannon reported that sales were successful again this year.

Although there were fewer vendors than usual selling model railroad and dollhouse items, visitors always seem to appreciate the combination of the two hobbies. Dollhouse modelers enjoy our scenery, which for them is landscaping. Many model railroaders find small items from the dollhouse hobby which work with model railroading as well.

Members of Spikey's Station came to the Augusta Armory together as a field trip for their regular bi-weekly group meeting.

Thanks again to all the club members who helped to make our participation in the Augusta show a success.





THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

144 Mill Street
Auburn, Me 04210

<http://www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org>

Facebook: Great Falls Model Railroad Club

An Educational Foundation

OFFICERS:

President:

Mike Meserve
574-1476
y2f250mike@yahoo.com

Vice President:

Jamie Robinson
212-6027
j-robinson@roadrunner.com

Secretary:

Paul Lodge - 966-3641
paul lodge@gwi.net

Treasurer:

Owen Buck, 485-9736
obuck61@hotmail.com

Librarian/Archivist

George Pitchard 330-9860
greatfallsmodelrailroadclub@yahoo.com

Directors:

Rick James, 740-1266
Darin Long, 782-3652
Eric Long, 754-4493

Webmaster:

Joe Marshall - 751-0554
braintriggers@gmail.com
Assistant Webmaster:
Frances Lodge - 966-3641
paul lodge@gwi.net

Social Media Editor

Tami Paine, 595-4668
Tami.girardin@yahoo.com

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Editor:

Terry King
576-3788
greatfallsmodelrailroadclub@yahoo.com

Proofreader:

Frances Lodge
paul lodge@gwi.net

Address Change

If your mailing or e-mail address changes please notify
Paul Lodge at
paul lodge@gwi.net

www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org

Upcoming Events

March 21, Maine 3-railers Show at Augusta Elks Club'

April 25, Train Show, Mt. Ararat High School, Topsham 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

August 15, Train Festival at G.F.M.R.R.C.

November 7, Train Show, Mt. Ararat High School, Topsham 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

November 21, 22, 27 & 28, ExTRAINaganza at G.F.M.R.R.C. Please check web site or Facebook page.

Please check web site or Facebook for any changes.



Recurrent Activities

Operating Sessions

March—21—9:00 a.m. to Noon
April _ 4 & 18—9:00 a.m. to Noon

Membership Meeting

3rd Thursday of each month

Modelers Forum

4th Thursday of each month— 7:00 p.m.

Spikey's Station

March 14 & 28, 9:00 to Noon
April 11— 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Work Session

Every Wed. Evening - 6:00 p.m.