



Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING
????????
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- \$204.00
- ◆ April— \$00.00
- ◆ April-\$0.00

PRINTER

CARTRIDGES:

2019: \$547.00
YTD: \$20.00
April: 0.00

MEMBERSHIP:

132

THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 24. ISSUE 5

MAY 2020

ELECTION OF OFFICERS POSTPONED

The officers of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club for the following year are usually elected at the annual meeting in May. Since the railroad club is closed because of the Coronavirus, the election is being postponed until a further date after the club reopens.

Some members of the Executive Committee have suggested that we consider amending the club constitution and bylaws to include some emergency powers in the case of something like this happening again. One proposal that would require an amendment was that we allow voting by mail or email in an emergency. Any change to the constitution and bylaws would need to be done at a meeting and the membership would need to be notified two weeks before the meeting. We hope that club members will let us know if you have other suggestions.

THANK YOU, NEW AUTHORS

By Terry King

This issue of *The Signal* contains articles from some of our members about their own model railroads. We hope to see many more of these articles in upcoming issues.

If you think that you could not write an article, think again. I bet every author had that same thought before they started their first article. All you need is a subject. Then make an outline of the thoughts you would like to convey and flesh them out. Our proofreader, Frances Lodge, is always willing to edit your article and give you any help that you may need. Writing an article can give you a feeling of satisfaction and keep you out of your spouse's hair for a while!

I would also like to know if any of our club members are going to be published in a national magazine. If you are a member of the National Model Railroad Association, articles in national magazines can count towards your Author's Merit Award. This is one of the first steps in becoming a Master Model Railroader.

If you are not yet a member of the N.M.R.A., consider the benefits of joining. Belonging to the N.M.R.A. gives you the opportunity to meet other model railroaders throughout our great country. As a member of the N.M.R.A., I have ridden on a CN, SW-1 in Montreal, Canada, at Republic Locomotive Works. I have seen some excellent model railroads throughout New England, New York and even Canada. While attending the N.M.R.A. National convention in Atlanta, Georgia, I also saw outstanding model railroads in that area.

PROJECT: HOME TEST TRACK

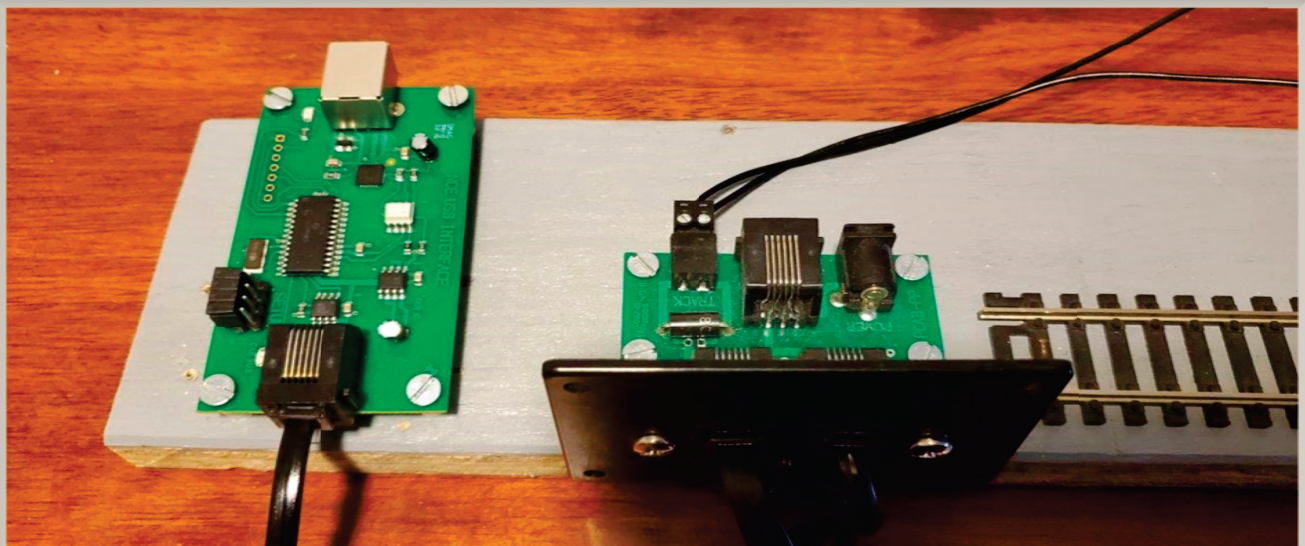
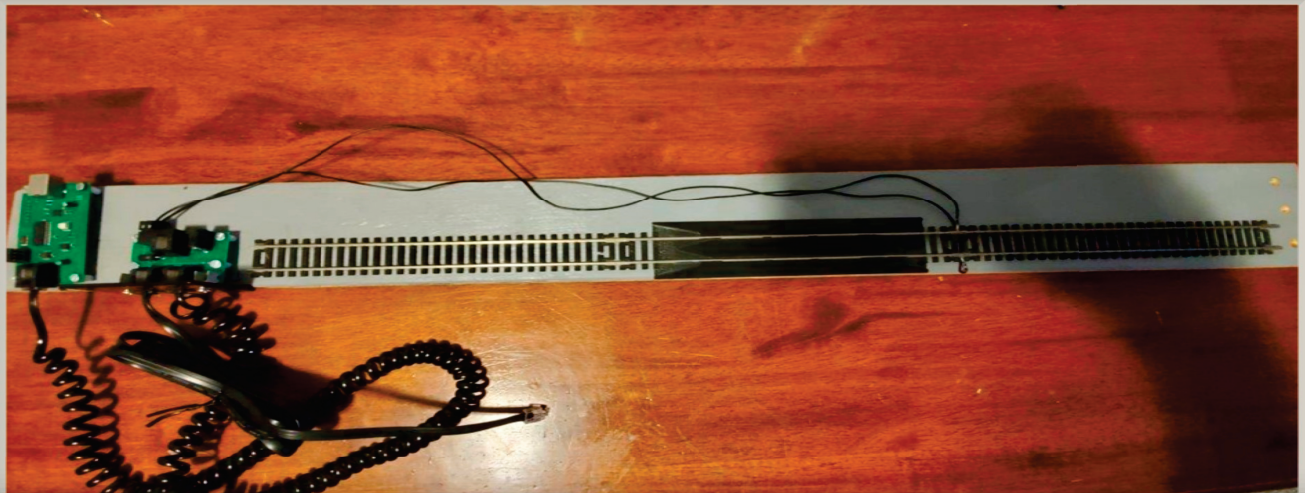
By Mike Meserve

Last week I finally made a proper test track. Before this it was loose and not stable enough to do any programming. This kit has the NCE Power Cab Starter Kit, NCE USB Adapter, and Atlas power feeds. I found some scrap wood at the club and Darin Long helped me cut it to fit. I had originally set the panels backwards, and the feed was not long enough. I had to swap the panels, and it now works without issue.

I used some plastic tubing and some special screws to create a space below the circuit boards. Since this is a custom setup and will be staying this way, I will work on locating a shorter cable to replace the coily cord which I still need to use for the layout.

I've also started another project of kit bashing a Walthers Mainline Hi-Cube, Re-Rail Engineering EoT (FRED), and Athearn Genesis trucks electric pickups. I am taking the FRED kit, and having the circuit board moved inside the car, so it is no longer inside the truck, and will look more prototype than the current design of the kit details.

I've included two pictures to go with this article and will provide more pictures once the project is completed.



HOME LAYOUT UPDATE

By Jay Wiley

I have made an unplanned expansion of my home layout after a friend who is downsizing gave me his entire collection of four HO steam engines, cars and kits, structures, track, switches and cork roadbed along with some tools and supplies. Two of the engines are old Bachmann 4-8-4 units that I brought to the club during an operating session. Eric Long gave me a lot of help to get them running again. One engine had to be cannibalized to replace the broken drive wheels with a gear shaft which had split on the Norfolk and Western J Class 611.

My existing layout had turns and switches with an 18-inch radius that were too tight for the big engines and the six cars of the Norfolk & Western passenger car set. To make room for two loops with larger radius curves, I added a shelf around the perimeter 4'6" wide x 14'6" long. My layout is now 5'9" wide x 16'6" long and is wired so that each section can be powered by either standard DC or DCC with power control switches. I've included some pictures of the shelf under construction and the big engines included in the set given to me.

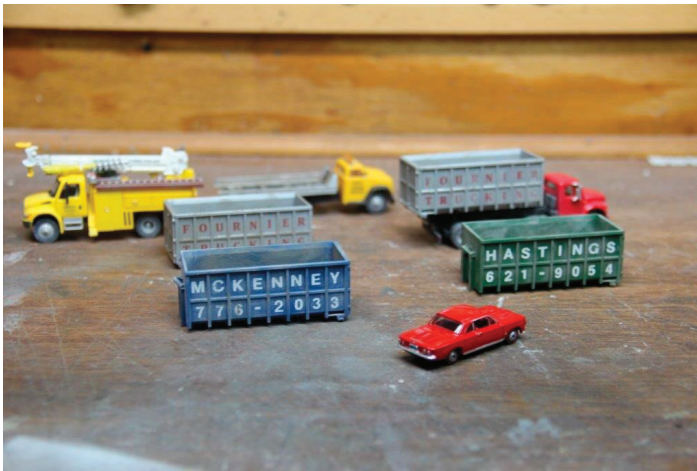
I am currently finishing a canyon that is crossed by two bridges and then I plan to start on a new tunnel. The "logs and boulders" on the canyon floor are rocks and twigs brought back from a vacation in Santa Fe, where I rode the Cumbres and Toltec narrow gauge railroad steam train out of Chama, New Mexico. I have some photo-printed desert background scenes on order from England to go along the back of the layout.



LARRY CANNON'S LAYOUT UPDATE

By Larry Cannon

This is what Larry Cannon has been working on recently after receiving an order from Model Train Stuff. The 1963 Corvair coupe is the only thing going on the layout "stock". The rest have received custom decals and weathering. The dumpsters were repainted. The ramp truck was backdated with a Mini Lindy truck cab and other added details, including a winch and the light bar that were scratch built. The cab off the ramp truck was used to back date the dumpster truck. The Vermont Electric Co-op truck received additional painting and some further details. The vehicles with figures and additional details will be used to liven up a few places on the layout.



MAXVILLE DIVISION CSX

By Owen Buck

The Maxville, my personal layout, is a fictitious division of modern-era CSX, located at an undisclosed location in the northeastern USA. Features include a roundhouse, an intermodal marine terminal, and an operational light-house. It is a quirky railroad in that it doesn't necessarily follow the prototype or do things in the most cost-effective way. But that's just fine with the division's CEO as long as he's having fun!

The scale is HO. The usual power source is NCE DCC, but each of the four power districts can be converted to run on DC with a throw switch. The railroad has a few "legacy" DC locomotives, and several of the Bachman historical series, that are used for excursions (photo).

There is a folded-dogbone continuous loop plus three out-and-back destinations. Atlas code 100 track is used throughout; the CEO thinks that it gives some operational advantage and his aging eyes don't see much of any difference from the other codes. During the pandemic lockdown all turnouts were renovated, replacing Caboose Industries ground throws with Blue Points, and the frogs were all powered.

The railroad shares the basement with my wife's composting and earthworm operation. This provided the inspiration for one of the industries (Annelid photo).

The Maxville is a work in process, with no scenery yet and only a few structures.



THE McCLINTICK LAYOUT

By Jolene McClintick

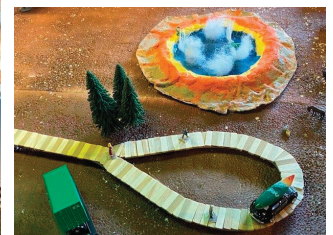
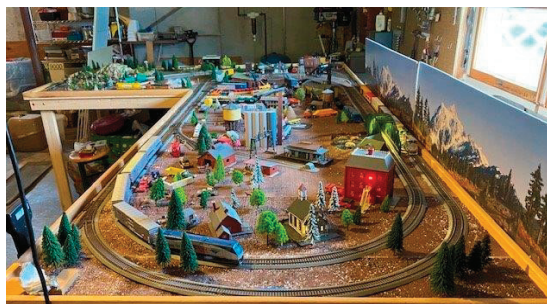
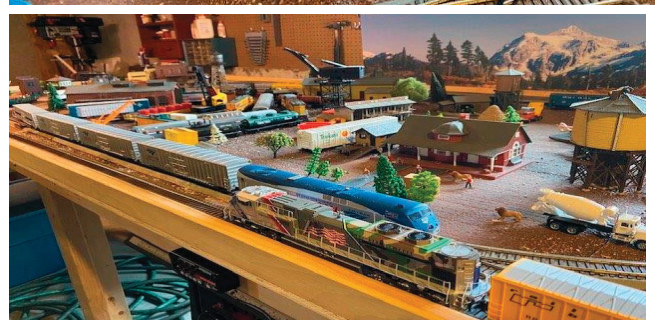
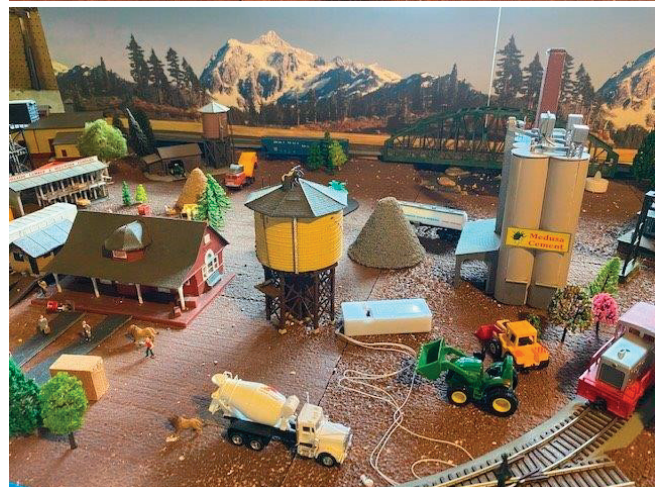
My husband Mark McClintick has been a model train enthusiast for years. He had trains as a kid. In the early days of our marriage, he built an N-scale model railroad. That one didn't get as far as he wanted, and he quit it after several years. In 2015 Mark was diagnosed with Early Onset Alzheimer's. That meant no more work for him so he had more time on his hands. He wanted to get into model trains again, and this time he wanted to model HO scale.

Even in the early stages of his disease, Mark was limited in what he could do so I suggested the Atlas True Track to make it easier for us. Our first purchase was the simple oval starter's kit, which we laid out on our dining room table. Around that time we went to the annual Balloon Festival in Lewiston; and on the way home, we saw the sign for the Great Falls Model Railroad Club. We were hooked! We joined the club soon after and attended some of the model railroading classes. At the bi-annual train shows, we bought a lot of buildings, scenery and cars. We also attended the big annual train show in East Springfield, MA a couple of times. The amount of "stuff" that is there boggles the mind. We had caught the bug and wanted to expand our layout. Mark's Dad built a train table for us and we were off!

We have spent a lot of time in our basement working on the track and on scenery. I have been amazed at the kinds of work I have done on the layout. I never thought I would be able to lay down track, put together a building and work through the problems that are normal on a layout. One piece of scenery that I am proud of is the Grand Prismatic Spring that looks like the one in Yellowstone Park. That was one of the most marvelous, colorful sites we had ever seen! Although I have very little artistic ability, I managed to pull it off! My brother-in-law, Charlie, another train enthusiast, built the wooden ramp that is near it to mirror the real one.

One great tip that I would highly recommend is using "Shaper Sheet" sold by Woodland Scenics. It made building my first mountain so easy! I followed the steps in a Youtube video by Woodland and it came out great. I also used it to make the Grand Prismatic Spring.

This hobby has given us a lot of joy over the years and we are grateful for it.



THE TOOT'N CHUG RAIL LINES

BY Dick Clark

After all the beautiful weather we had in March, Dick Clark must have been anxious to get his garden railroad set up for spring - and the day after he finally set it up, we get SNOW! The weather man was right. Here are some pictures of Dick Clark's Toot'n Chug Rail Lines taken on April 12, the day after the crew had gone out and prepared the rail lines for operation.





THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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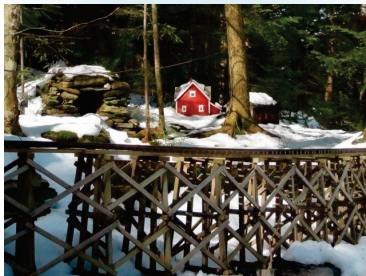
www.greatfallsmodelrrclub.org

Upcoming Events



Recurrent Activities

Please check web site or Facebook page.



The club
house is
closed
until
further
notice.

Operating Sessions

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Regular Monthly Meeting

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Spikey's Station

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Work Session

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE