THE SIGNAL

THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 24. ISSUE 11 NOVEMBER 2020

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- $431.00
- September— $38.00
- October—$53.00

When you send an article with pictures, please do not embed them into the article. Please send them as a separate file.
This way we can lower the number of MP's.
This way we can send the Signal as one file.

EASTERN MOUNTAIN COASTLINE RAILROAD EMC RR (part 3)

By James Long

Throughout the summer months, my son Darin, my brother Bob, and I have made a lot of changes on our layout, the Eastern Mountain Coastline Railroad. We are really making progress towards completion and look forward to an open house next summer, including the 2021 Great Falls Model Railroad picnic.

The 400-ton coaling tower is in its permanent place. Sitting next to the turntable and roundhouse are the major overhaul shop, the car shop and the engine rebuilding shop with the machine tools to do complete engine overhauls

The north end of the yard now includes improvements to the coastline and the city. Two -inch Styrofoam pieces raise the elevation from the yard to add scenic dimension; and the Styrofoam is cut in a curve to follow the mainline track. This is faced with plaster rock castings we made to indicate that space for the tracks was cut into the stone. The other side of the rocks is lower – dropping back down to the original bench level for the ocean. Again, there is a rock face. A building sits on the raised level, with its basement at ocean level. I construct buildings, modular style, in the living room on quarter-inch thick plastic sheets.

The next step is to cover that area of the layout with scenic sheet material for ground cover, trees, bushes, and rock outcroppings. The product we use is "Shaper Sheet" by Woodland Scenics, which comes in a convenient roll. This heavy aluminum sheeting has a soft fuzz covering and is the perfect way to add scenery to your layout. It is ready for spray adhesive and ground foam of grass, earth and dirt. You can wrinkle it up to make bumps and rises, and it will hold any shape you create. It can be hollow or sit tight to something. I use spray paint to cover the white material, and then spray adhesive to hold the grass, dirt and other details in place. This is much faster than any other system. The hill scene on top of the mountain took about 20 minutes from start to finish, including trees.

The photos with this article show the method and the results. One photo shows the ocean, buildings, lighthouse and rock shoals. Another picture shows the wrinkled Shaper Sheet painted to create the ocean. I used four colors to make the ocean with waves: cerulean blue, phthalocyanine green, permanent green light, and permanent blue light. The crests of the waves were highlighted with white paint.

If you read the latest *Model Railroader* article on new techniques for scenery, consider the amount of time and work it took them to create the supporting structures to hold up the hillside. Then add the time and work that was needed to cover it with a tinted texture product to hide the screening. Theirs is a multiple-step process that is NOT necessary with the Shaper Sheet. The cost savings alone is great; and the time saved, if doing a large layout, is a plus also. The convenience of using spray paint from a can or using an air brush is so quick compared to brushing it on and needing two coats in some places. With spray adhesive to set ground cover into it, the project is done. Bushes and trees look so good when set in place on the Shaper Sheet.

I hope you'll try this scenic sheet material. Shaper Sheet by Woodland Scenics is quick and simple to use. Have fun!

Please look at Jim's pictures on page 5.

HO-SCALE COLLECTION FOR SALE

By Kevin LaMarre

"Train Season" is here, and it's not too early to be thinking about Christmas. I'm selling all my Model Railroad equipment and would like to give first option to club members. There's probably something here for everyone: locomotives, lots of rolling stock, track and switches, control equipment, and buildings: completed ones and kits, Model Railroad How-To library, as well as odds and ends.

I have lots of collectable & custom-painted Maine Central (including the MEC MoW custom-painted vehicles pictured below), Bangor & Aroostook, and B & M. Also misc. things for someone just getting into the hobby on a limited budget. I'll accept reasonable offers on items not marked and will even listen to offers in "bulk"! Help me clear out my garage and pay some bills, and grow your layout at the same time!

Still available for sale is the three-part train table and HO scale test table and work bench! Buy the tables, the test bench or all of it. The train table would be excellent for someone just starting out, or for someone wanting to expand their layout.

C'mon by and check it out! You can contact me for an appointment to come see and buy! Kevin LaMarre, 4 Shaw Road, Raymond, ME. email: klamarre@maine.rr.com

MODELERS FORUM

By Kent Waterson

The Modeler's Forum meet with the faithful few on Thursday, October 22. Covid-19, work responsibilities and other reasons limited the participants to Bob Willard, Dexter Baum, George Pitchard and Kent Waterson.

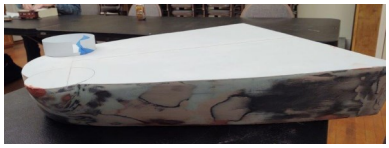
Although Bob did not bring anything to present, he updated us on his work of dismantling his 2-rail O-Scale layout and making preparations to install the "Narrow-minded Guys from Maine" On30 layout.

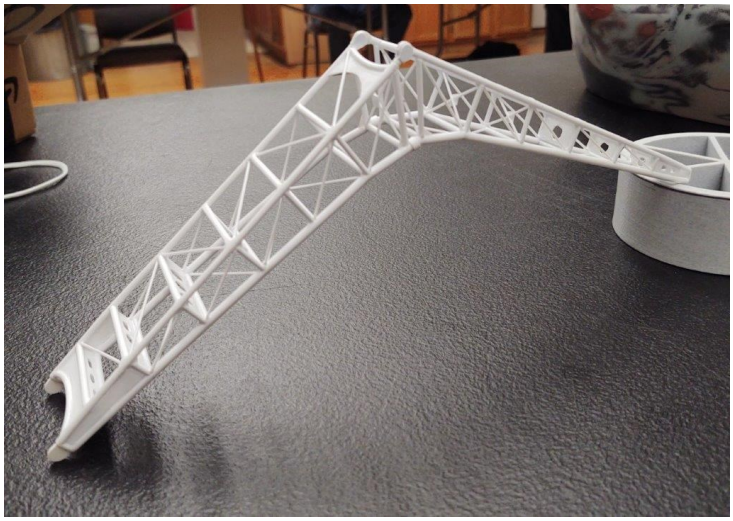
Dexter mentioned that he is thinking of scratch-building a turntable for his proposed layout, which triggered a wonderful discussion on the subject. George retrieved a set of plans from the library that would perhaps be useful, giving Dexter somewhere to start.

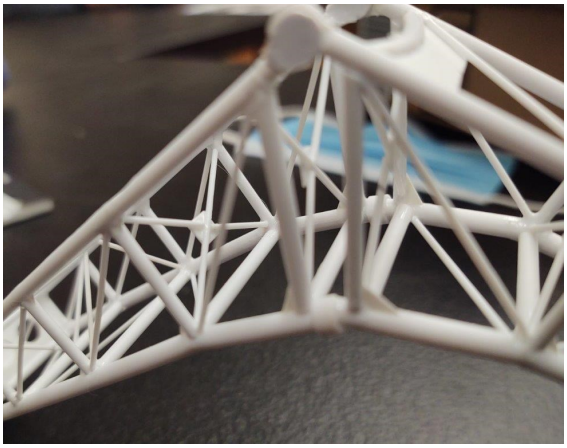
George then presented a series of 2' gauge cars he showed last month. Since the last month he had been able to paint and decal and/or dry letter the various models. He used three colors of boxcar-type reds: a true Boxcar Red, an Oxide Red, and a Tuscan Red. (I won't attempt to say which is on which car as I always seem to get these details wrong!) All the cars were based "more or less" on various prototypes; the locomotive was based on the Sandy River #9. George gave an encyclopedic history of each of the cars and where they deviated from the prototype.

Last was Kent with an update on his battleship diorama. The hull sides were covered with fiberglass cloth and resin, with final shaping using automotive body filler. The deck is covered with sheets of styrene. He showed pieces and parts for the gun shields on the quarterdeck and discussed challenges with forming the rings of styrene. At this point George asked, "Why don't you use brass?" It's simple things like this that make the Forum invaluable. The collective ideas of the group result in a better final model. Thanks, George!

The meeting adjourned about 8:00, but it was a profitable hour. We welcome others to come and share your knowledge. We are all the better because of it! Next month's meeting date is to-be-determined (the 4th Thursday is Thanksgiving). We will email out the date when it is set. Hope to see you there.







LIBRARY NOTICE

By George Pitchard

Effective immediately, the GFMRRC Library is unable to accept donations of magazines in any quantity, as it has been made clear to the Librarian that there are too many magazines here now! That said, however, there are a few (emphasis on the FEW) magazines needed to fill holes in the Library's collections (a partial list is appended hereunto); and if there exists a relevant magazine that the Library does not already have (in excruciating duplication!), that would of course be welcome as always.

In the hole-filling category, the library needs Na*rrow Gauge & Short Line Gazette*: Sept/Oct 2014; Jan/Feb, March/Apr, May/June and Nov/Dec 2015; March/Apr 2016; and all from and including May/June 2017 through March/Apr 2020, excepting only Jan/Feb 2019. Of *Model Craftsman*, predecessor of *Railroad Model Craftsman*, many issues in the 1930s and 1940s are needed, rather too many to list here. TRAINS needed are September 1941 through February 1942; March and October 1947, November 1949 and June 1969; *Classic Trains* needs Winter 2011 and Fall 2012.

Please add to the list of things desired, the two publications antecedent to the *Narrow Gauge & Short Line Gazette* – FINELINES, and SLIM GAUGE NEWS, any or all would be welcomed rapturously; and both, complete, would make a stack not quite a foot tall. Other publications that the Library has very few of, and would like more: the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society's BULLETIN, as it was once called, issued twice a year, and more recently titled RAILROAD HISTORY; and the National Railway Historical Society's BULLETIN. In spite of the similarities in the names, these are two very distinctly separate organizations, and their publications really ought to be a part of this Library's collections, so any would be welcomed.

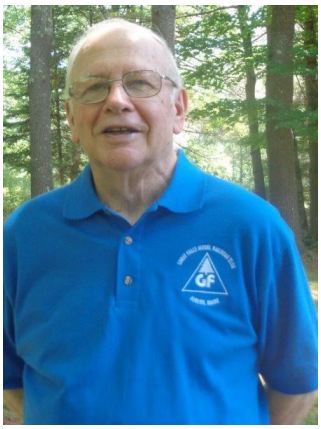
Thanks for listening. Cheers! From the Librarian.

AMHERST RAILWAY SOCIETY CANCELS JANUARY 2021 SHOW

(adapted from their recent flyer)

The Board of Directors of the Amherst Railway Society has announced the cancellation of their January 2021 Railroad Hobby Show at Eastern States. Their decision was made out of an abundance of caution and for the safety of attendees, exhibitors, and the entire "Train Show Community."

Although it was one of their hardest decisions in the 54 years of show history, they believe it's the right thing to do for the health and safety of the 25,000 people who are welcomed each year. After exploring all their options with people at Eastern States, they realized that "the largest Train Show in North America would not be the same because of the ever-changing requirements for venues such as ours during the Covid pandemic." A Virtual Railroad Hobby Show for that same weekend is being planned and details will be an-



GFMRRC SHIRTS

By Paul Lodge

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club T-shirts and polo shirts with the GFMRRC logo are still available at the club store. To make arrangements to pick up and pay for your shirt, contact George Pitchard at 330-9860 or Eric Long at 754-4493 or longwoodworker007@gmail.com

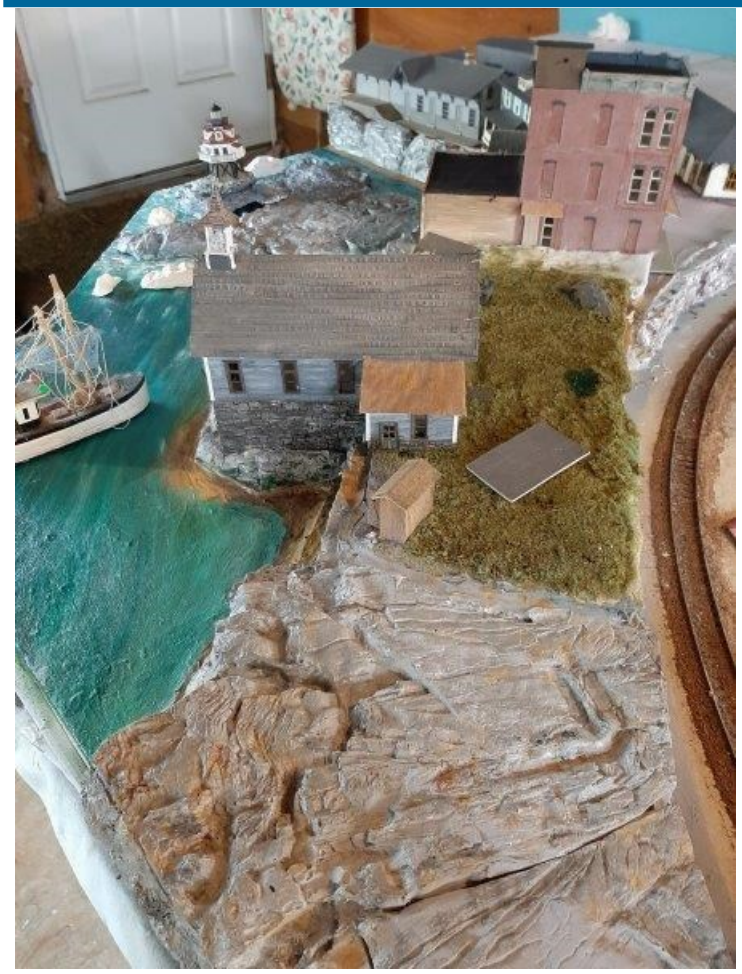
The shirts are medium blue with white for the design and lettering. The polo shirt will be sold exclusively to club members, but T-shirts would make excellent Christmas gifts. Both the T-shirt and polo shirt are available in adult sizes Small, Medium, Large, XL, 2XL, and 3XL. T-shirts cost $10 and polo shirts cost $20.

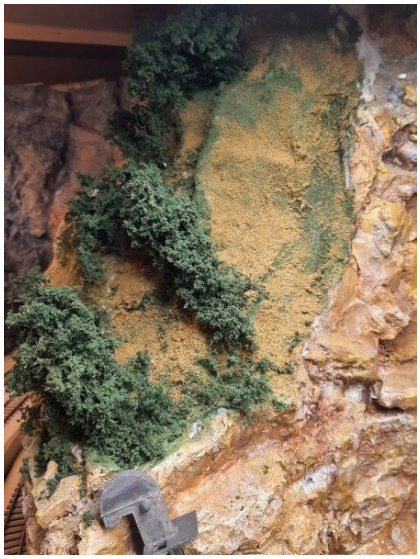
If you ordered a shirt in the spring, it's not too late to pick it up or have it mailed to you. We have a few extra shirts in all sizes in addition to those shirts that were pre-ordered. If it is more convenient for you, we can mail the shirt to you at an additional charge of $10 for postage. (Our original offer did not include enough money to cover postage.) ***Checks can be made payable to GFMRRC and sent to Owen Buck, Treasurer; GFMRRC, 144 Mill Street, Auburn, ME 04210***. Even if you pre-ordered, please let Owen know what style and size you would like sent to you.

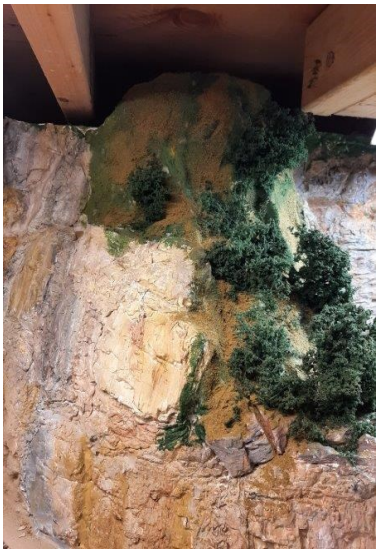
We look forward to the time when COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted and we can all wear our Great Falls Model Railroad Club shirts to meetings and other club activities.

See pictures above.

PICTURES FROM FRONT PAGE







CLEANING TRACK

By Dick Clark

Why do you need to clean track? Removing any grease, oils, dust or dirt will provide a clean surface to make good conductivity for the engine to run smoothly. When the rails are clean, the rail heads will feel clean and smooth. (Please note that touching the rail leaves oil from fingerprints on the rail.) Any gauge rail line will run better if there is a way to keep the rail heads clean.

There are many ways to clean rails. You can purchase a cleaning car that is ready for you to run on your layout and just follow their directions. If you are into kit-bashing, you can build your own track-cleaning car. I have explained later in this article the way I make my own. You do not have to run the cleaner car every time you operate. When operating, if you notice the engine lights start to flicker and the engine starts to hitch in certain areas, you can add the cleaner car to your consist behind the engine and run the train for a while.

When you are operating your layout, the track cleaning car can be used with just the engine or anywhere in the consist. In the spring when I start operating on the G-Gauge rail lines outdoors, I push the track cleaner on the front of the engine to clean the rail heads so the engine wheels have a cleaner path. In the spring or whenever there is a long time between operations, I run the track cleaner in front of the engine three times around.

I have made my own track-cleaning system for my G-Gauge and HO rail lines. Although I have shown HO and G-Gauge cars and track as illustrations, this method works for all gauges.

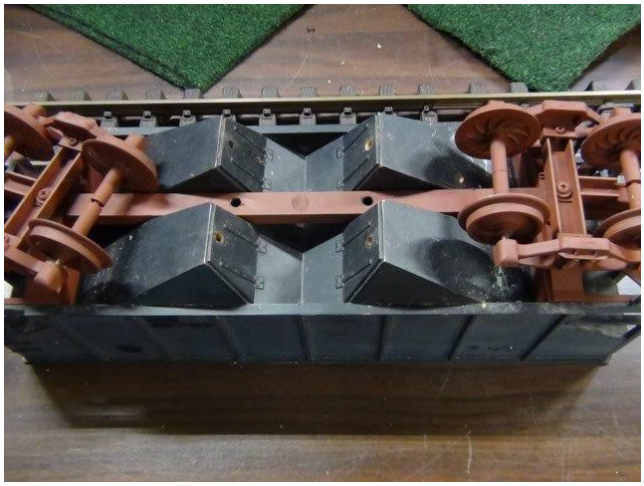
Pictures 1 through 4 show what I have used for track cleaning equipment on my HO layout. Photo #4 is a Bright Boy track-cleaning pad. Pictures 5 and 6 show what I have used to clean my G-Gauge layout. (Photo #6 shows a dirty pad that needs to be changed.)

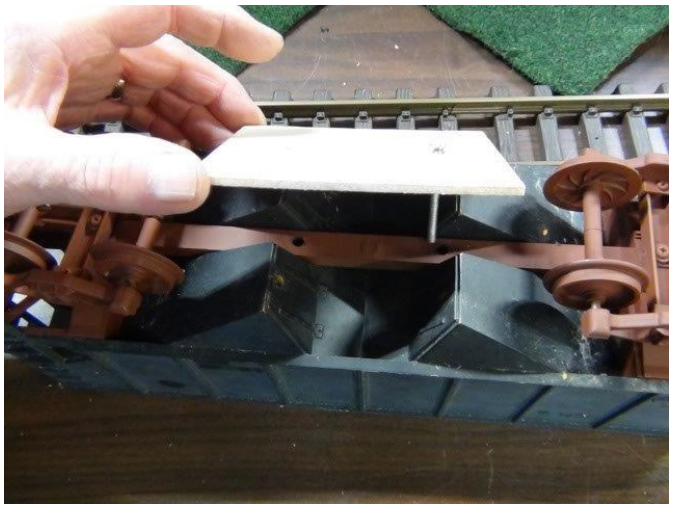
When I make my own track-cleaning system, I take any car that will do the job and proceed to install the cleaning pad (Photo #7). I use a thin piece of luan board or a board milled down to 3/16th" that will fit between the trucks (Photo #8).

Photo #9 shows drill bits, nuts, bolts and drill bits that can be used for this project, depending on what car you use. Drill holes in the board to fit into the bottom of the car. Place bolts into the bottom of the board, then into the car with the nuts on the inside of the car. You may want to double nut the bolts or use fingernail polish to secure the nuts to the screw threads (Pictures 10 through 13).

Although you can Velcro the pad to the board, I use hot glue to secure the pad to the board (Photo #14). This makes it easier to replace the pad when it has become dirty and looks like the pad in Photo #6. You will want to taper both ends of the pad so it will slide over the switches better (also seen in Photo #6).

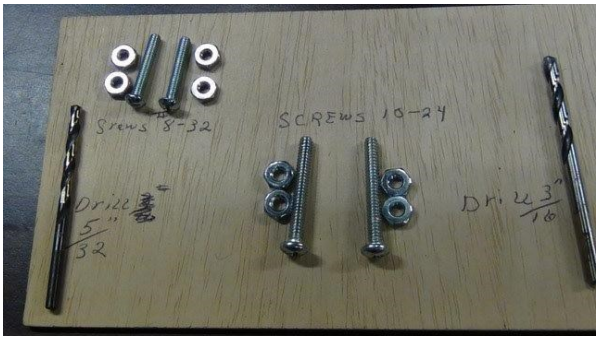
You can paint the board to blend in with your car. Photo #15 shows what the bottom of the car will look like when the project is finished. Photo #16 shows what it will look like as seen from below the rails. Pictures 17 and 18 show the finished cleaning car sitting on the rails.

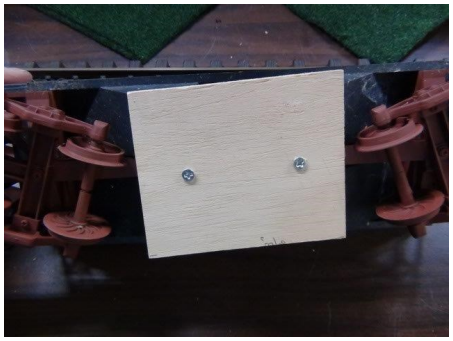


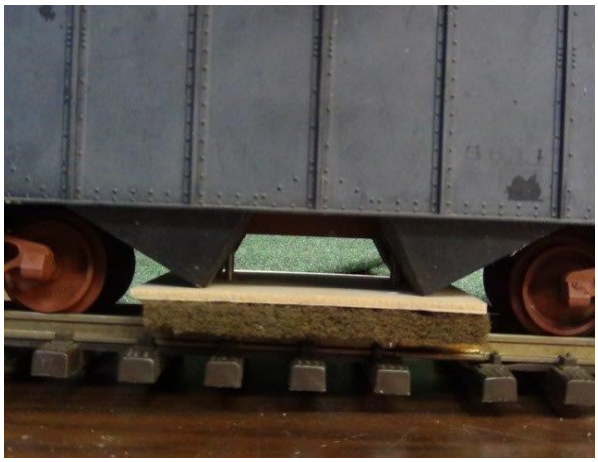


More track cleaning pictures.

By Dick Clark (







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Upcoming Events

Recurrent Activities

Please check our web site on Facebook.

Operating Sessions

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Regular Monthly Meeting

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Spikey's Station

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Work Session

Every Wed. night—6:00 p.m.

Modelers Forum

To be announced!