



Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING
Dec. 16, 2021
6:45 p.m.

*Bring a friend to our
next meeting.*

When you send an article with pictures, please do not embed them into the article—send them as a separate file.

DO YOU WANT TO WIN?

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

YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO
WIN!

Bottles for Basics:

- ♦ September—\$44.20
- ♦ October—\$59.00
- ♦ November—\$44.00

**We are no longer
collecting used
ink cartridges or
toner packs.**

THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 25 ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2021

MONTHLY MEETING DEC. 16

First of all, **THANK YOU** to the many members who took time from their busy lives to help out during ExTRAINaganza. It was a success for the club, and a real pleasure to see so many faithful visitors returning to see what we've been up to. If you missed the *Sun Journal* photo spread, check it out here: <https://www.sunjournal.com/2021/11/26/photo-album-extrainaganza-chugs-along-in-auburn/>.

Wow! It's December. Cool weather and short days. Just think, in just a few weeks, the days will start getting longer again!

The December meeting is our annual Potluck dinner. Please bring a main dish, side, salad and/or desert. WEARING OF UGLY CHRISTMAS SWEATERS (OR EVEN PRETTY ONES) IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED!

NOVEMBER 18 MEETING MINUTES

Paul Lodge — Deputized Secretary

Before the meeting began, a video was shown of a double-deck layout with exceptional scenery [[NS Ashville District](#)].

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*. Because Secretary Tami Paine is under COVID quarantine, Paul Lodge was secretary for tonight's meeting.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Jamie Robinson as Treasurer Owen Buck was away. It was noted that next month will be the annual Christmas Party, which is traditionally when members sign up for Utility Team donations for the monthly electricity bill of \$150 or the water bill of \$30 a month. Some members have donated \$50, \$75, or \$100 with the difference made up by other members. The additional \$2,100 helps the club to maintain its current level of dues. This is particularly important since we have not been able to have train shows because of COVID-19. The Treasurer's Report was approved as given.

Librarian George Pitchard said that the library has recently received a large donation of about one hundred books. Some of the books are duplicates and are available for sale.

For the layout updates, George reported that there will be three loops running for the ExTRAINaganza. One of the loops will be O-gauge two-rail. The other two will be traditional three-rail.

NOVEMBER 18 MEETING MINUTES

(continued)

It was reported that the HO layout is ready to run and housekeeping duties have been accomplished. Dick Clark was in recently and has the G-gauge layout in operating condition. New bumpers have been added to John Middleton's G-gauge switching layout and it is in good running condition.

The N-scale layout has the electrical work completed and new lighting is in the works.

President Mike Meserve noted that we are one of a very few clubs in the United States with this many working scale layouts in its facility, and we should be proud of our accomplishments. We are all very grateful for the vision and generosity of the clubs founders and senior members that put us in the position we're in today.

Bob Willard announced that the next Modelers Forum meeting will be held on Thursday, December 2 at 7 p.m. because the usual fourth Thursday is Thanksgiving. It was pointed out that members can go to the [club's website](#) and see all the photos of the models on which club members are working. Some pictures are used for the monthly newsletter, but there are many more on the website.

The ExTRAINaganza is scheduled for the next two weekends. More club members are needed to cover all the areas in the building. Masks will be required and those coming to the event will need to sign a waiver form excluding us from any responsibility for COVID. Food for club volunteers was mentioned; club members are asked to bring food on the days they plan to attend. Some scheduling has already been done, but more is better than less. It is planned to have a table for club members to demonstrate how they are working on projects. The "Hoop-A-Caboose" will be used as the children's game. The plastic hoops can be cleaned easily between turns. There will be at least three hand-sanitizing sites throughout the building. Eric Long has contacted a reporter from the *Lewiston Sun/Journal*, and she will come during the first weekend of the event so that publicity will be available for the second weekend. *[NOTE: this did not happen; Russ Dillingham, photographer, came on Fri., Nov. 26; see the photo spread here: <https://www.sunjournal.com/2021/11/26/photo-album-extrainaganza-chugs-along-in-auburn/>]*

The next order of business was the 50/50 raffle and the Attendance Prize. Eric Long won both. For the Attendance Prize, Eric selected the Central Maine and Quebec hat.



DONATIONS

The donation [Honor Roll](#) continues to grow, and there are still opportunities to contribute to the 2021 [Utility Sponsor](#) program, both Water and Electric.

Don't miss your chance to sign up at the December Meeting as a Utility Sponsor for 2022!

MODELER'S FORUM Dec. 2 by Kent Waterson

Check out many more Modeler's Forum photos on our website [HERE](#).

A small group of modelers braved the wintery-mix conditions and gathered for the Modeler's Forum on Thursday, December 2nd. Opening discussions centered around the results of the ExTRAINaganza last weekend, a short discussion on paint types (and plusses and minuses of each). Attending that night were Bob Willard, Jamie Robinson, Carmen Anastase, John McMullen and Kent Waterson.

Bob started the evening commenting that he had a very productive few days of modeling during the ExTRAINaganza! Simply working on his projects while the event was happening proved to be a popular attraction as well as a productive time.

Bob then presented an update on his steam shovel shown last month. The shovel now has a completed body with siding and doors and painted since the last meeting. The roof was dry-brushed with silver and then Pan Pastel rust tones applied over the silver. Shades on the windows were created by rolling paper medical tape around a styrene tube core.



Another update was on the White Gas Truck. The tank is now ready for mounting on the vehicle. The front half of the frame (with the body) came from the kit while the back half was fashioned from styrene strip stock. After-market rubber wheels were also added.



The last project, just beginning, was from the Chevrolet 2-Ton truck. Right now, it is just the frame, with wheels added from a wind-up toy. What will it be? Bob is still undecided at this point.



Kent was up next and presented the latest updates on the battleship catapult. All the small subassemblies have been completed and assembled into larger assemblies. All parts have been primed and prepped for final top color. Currently Archer Fine Transfer rivet decals are being added to the main catapult frame, a tedious job with the vast number of rivets on the catapults.



John was up next and presented his first attempt at building a structure kit. John had purchased one of Dexter Baum's kits, the City Classics "The Company House" (3-Pack) kit. John showed a variety of tools he found helpful in constructing the kit including a variety of clamps. The first house is mostly finished, details included a few window shades made from scrapbook paper. The interior is painted black. John plans to add fiber-optic lighting to

to the building and did not want the light shining through. Also included with the kits was an out-house he assembled that will end up on a campground scene on his layout. For his first structure kit, the build came out very well and looked great! We look forward to seeing more of John's work.

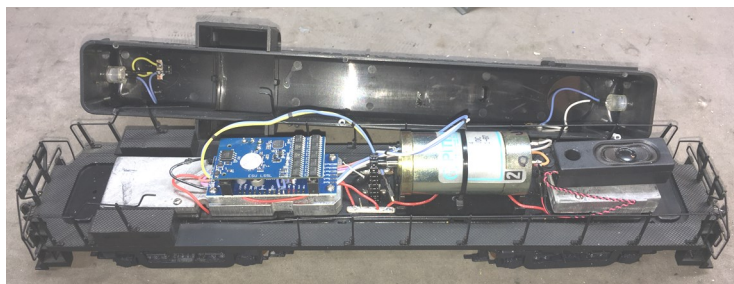


Carmen next presented a ~4' section of a background image that will be used on his layout. He showed a photo of the area where the background will be placed and was looking for suggestions on how to blend in the background with the surrounding scenery. One issue is the road on the layout that runs into the background: how to blend the two colors such that the dividing point is not so noticeable. Photo manipulation software was recommended since his background image was off the computer and printed.



Jamie wrapped up the evening talking about an O-Scale RS-3 he ran ... or intended to run ... at the ExTRAINaganza. The RS-3 is an older Weaver model with a “tank” drive mechanism *[so-called because the drive from motor to trucks is located partially inside the fuel tank]*. Jamie had tried to run the locomotive but various broken parts “derailed” his efforts. Jamie then took the locomotive home to make some repairs. While in the shop, Jamie added a Loksound 5L sound decoder and speaker. He also replaced the lights with LED lights. However, when the train was run, the drive mechanism produced more noise than the speaker and drowned out the effects. Jamie tried cleaning and lubricating all components but to no avail. Since the drive train is just so inherently noisy, Jamie hatched a scheme to replace the gear and chain arrangement with a pair of square 6-pole motors to drive the running gear. Hopefully next month we’ll get to see the results of his efforts.

[NOTE: these aren’t on Harbor Freight’s web-site anymore, but “scratch pens” are readily available via Amazon too]. Using the fiberglass brush, Jamie dipped it in 91% alcohol, swabbed the painted letters, let them sit for a minute, and rubbed them off with the brush, leaving the plastic behind clean and without any scratches. Very handy!

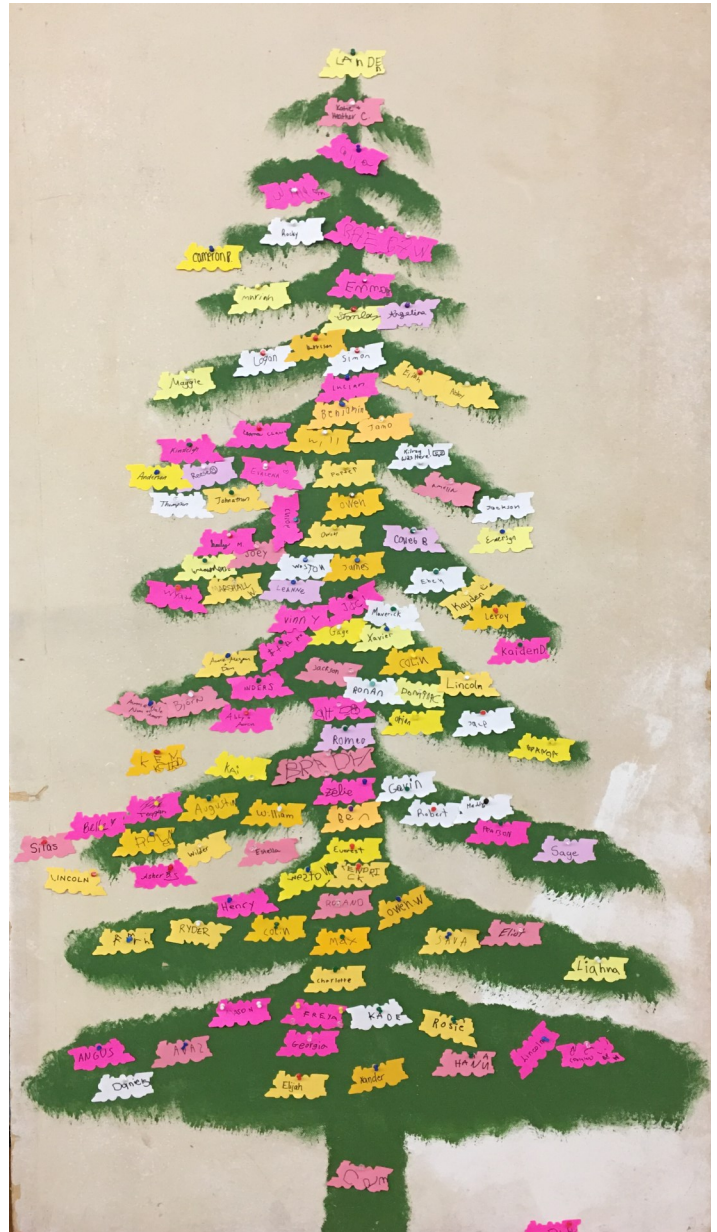


Jamie also presented a simple method for removing lettering from rolling stock. Simply painting over the lettering typically still leaves the lettering visible. To remove the lettering, Jamie purchased a cheap set of scratch brushes from Harbor Freight.

Although there were only five of us, the discussions lasted until 8:30 with a lot of useful information shared. The next meeting will be on January 27th (weather permitting); come join us and show us your work or simply share in the discussion. Hope to see you there next month.

ALONG THE LINE AT EXTRAINAGANZA







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THE SIGNAL

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Upcoming Events

**Surplus Assets Sale—Saturday,
Dec. 11 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.**



Grab your Great Falls gear at the Company Store, and join the Blu Cru!



[Please check our web site on Facebook.](#)

Recurrent Activities

Operating Sessions

Saturday, December 18

Saturday, January 1 "Op 'til you drop"
Steam only until noon, then whatever...

Regular Monthly Meeting

Thursday, December 18 at 6:45 p.m.

Spikey's Station

NONE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Work Session

Every Wednesday 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Every Saturday 9:00 a.m. to Noon
(unless there's an Operating Session)

Modelers Forum

Thursday, January 27 at 7:00 p.m.

Executive Committee

Thursday, Dec. 9 at 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, Jan. 13 at 6:30 p.m.