



# THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 12. ISSUE 9

FEBRUARY 2011



Member since June 1988

**NEXT MEETING**  
**February 17**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**NEXT MONTH**  
**Deadline for**  
**March**  
**Feb. 25, 2011**

**MEMBERSHIP**  
**120**

### ATTENDANCE PRIZE

Gregory Geagan's name was drawn and he was not present to win.

Will your name be drawn on Feb. 17? You have to be present to win!

### BOTTLES FOR BASICS

- ◆ YEAR TO DATE: \$401.80
- ◆ THIS MONTH: \$40.00
- ◆ NEXT MONTH: That is up to you!

## Great Falls At McLaughlin's By Ed & Brenda Leslie

Early in November a crew gathered to assemble a temporary G-scale layout in the 1800's barn at McLaughlin Garden. Tables used in the spring and summer for flower and plant sales were transformed into bench work. Scrap lumber made grades for changes in elevation. Next, burlap was placed to give it all the earth-toned coloring. By late morning, track was being laid and wire run to power supplies for a maiden test run. By mid-afternoon, our work had been completed.

Friday, December 3, we arrived early to run the first of six days in the barn. Kristin Perry and Jen O'Rourke of McLaughlin Garden had done a wonderful job of setting the scenery and decorating the barn and house for the Christmas festivities. Two heaters, although not heating the barn, did give us a place to warm ourselves. Jeff and Beth Chaffee soon had folks admiring their

handiwork on the three layouts that they had operating. Children really liked the opportunity to press the button that made the whistle blow. Soon from the Operation Lifesaver table and train raffle area Paul Lodge would answer with his whistle; and, of course, the G-scale area could not go without being heard.

I would like to thank all of those that came and helped with this event. Although this was not a big money maker for the club, it promotes the club in the community and sparks the interest of model railroading. And anytime Operation Lifesaver can be shared, you never know whose life may have been spared. From



setup to take down, thanks to the following members who attended and helped: Irving Young, Bob Russell, Paul Lodge, Tom Coulombe, Beth and Jeff Chaffee, Jerry Johnston (Hobo), Dave Kierstead, Gabriel Garcia, Travis Johnson, Bryce Weeks, Ed and Brenda Leslie.

## Craft Mania by Tom Coulombe

### Modeling Paint at Craftmania

Craftmania has recently added to their line of railroad articles the full line of Polly Scale paints along with the Tamiya paints and all the acrylic paints that they have had in stock previously. The Polly Scale paints sell for

\$5.65 per 1 oz. bottle. They also have a small inventory of Wood-



land Scenics products that you can add to your home layouts or modules. Lee Duguay, owner of Craftmania, is a member of the Great Falls Model Railroad Club and we should show our efforts to support him. By the way, club members receive a 15% discount at Craftmania.

# A Book Review by Jerry Johnston

The club librarian recommended a book that he thought I might like to read that had just been received in a recent donation to the library. I agreed when I heard the title and determined the credentials of the author.

It was a book written by an authentic hobo who operated during the 1930's. *Hoboing in the 1930's* was written by Irving (Fishbones) L. Stevens who came from Corinna, Maine. The book was published in 1982 by Milo Printing Co. of Milo, Maine.

The thirties was the heyday of hoboing that was largely brought about by the Depression times. The book is a short read of some 140 odd pages. It is a series of small chapters, each describing some phase of the Hobo life. Fishbones talks of looking for a free meal or work or both and of the problems of staying out of the crowbar hotel while trying to find a haymow hotel. A good hobo job paid 50 to 75 cents and room & board if lucky.

Most of the railroads had security people to keep the Hobo folks away. These "bulls"

as they were called would beat and throw any decent hobo into the crowbar hotel if they got the chance. The scenery bums had to be on guard at all times to avoid such a pitfall.

The hobo traveled to find work while the bum or tramp traveled to avoid work. People were more trusting and sympathetic in that period and a polite hobo could do quite well dining at many back door diners. A fun read describing the pitfalls of the hobo life.

"The book is a short read of some 140 odd pages. It is a series of small chapters, each describing some phase of the Hobo life. Fishbones talks of looking for a free meal or work or both and of the problems of staying out of the crowbar hotel while trying to find a haymow hotel."

## Snow Removal By Terry King



Removing snow at the club requires a lot of work. Tom Coulombe is on the tractor and Steven Martelli and Jerry Johnston are manning the shovels.

Photos by Terry King

## West Springfield Show By Tom Coulombe

It is amazing that over 20,000 people come to the West Springfield Show over a two-day period each January. The show is held in four buildings at the Big E Exposition Center in West Springfield, Massachusetts.

Plenty of displays of model trains from G-Scale to N-Scale and even one Z-Scale showed people what clubs around the New England area are doing, including the Maine N-Scalers from Portland. Lots of vendors displayed everything from Speeders to all gauges of model trains.

What caught my eye on Sunday morning as I was videotaping the different displays was an 18" diorama of a T-Scale train brought to the show by a vendor from New Jersey. I thought Z-Scale was small at 1:220 scale but this is 1:450

scale. Lo and behold, in the *Model Railroad News* that I received this week there was an article on T-Scale. The article and photos showed exactly what was on display at the West Springfield Show. The train is about ¼ inch wide and 1 ¼ inches long. Unbelievable what the Japanese can do! This scale was introduced by K. K. Eishindo of Japan at a train show in Tokyo in 2006 and went on sale in 2007. This model is now produced in Hong Kong. Because the cars and engine are so lightweight, the wheels are magnetic in order to keep them on the track. The power for the engine is picked from the wheels through springs that transmit the energy to copper strips; these engage a tiny motor that turns a plastic gear to run the train. The price for a four-car set is \$147, which is an amazing price considering the size of the T-Scale compared to N-Scale.



*"What caught my eye on Sunday morning as I was videotaping the different displays was an 18" diorama of a T-Scale train brought to the show by a vendor from New Jersey. I thought Z-Scale was small at 1:220 scale but this is 1:450 scale."*

Above is the new book rack in the library.

## The Chamber by Jerry Johnston

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club is now a member of the Androscoggin County Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is made up of over 1400 different companies, small businesses and non-profits such as our club.

Some three to four hundred people from these member groups meet once a month for the monthly breakfast meeting of the Chamber. Several things take place at this meeting.

New member organizations are introduced in a brief presentation at each meeting. The Great Falls Model Railroad Club was introduced in November 2010. At each

meeting six members are spotlighted. Those members set up tables to display anything they like that explains who they are and what they do. The club will be spotlighted in September 2011. There is also a featured speaker on some interesting subject at each meeting.

Any member of the club is eligible to attend one of these meetings or any of the many other varied activities that the Chamber has to offer. If you would like to attend a breakfast meeting, please contact Jerry Johnston at 966-2932 or email at [jjchef@megalink.net](mailto:jjchef@megalink.net). The cost to you is \$17 per person. Meetings

are typically at 7AM on the second Thursday of the month.





Paul Lodge

*“Terry King reported that about 65 percent of the current membership is receiving their newsletter by e-mail. This helps the club save postage expense.”*

## January Minutes by Paul Lodge Secretary

The evening’s video program featured the Mt. Washington Cog Railway and the G-Scale Golden Spike ceremony.

President Rick James opened the meeting. There were several visitors at the meeting so Rick asked all those present to introduce themselves.

There was no official meeting during the December Christmas party meeting, therefore, there were no minutes to report.

Tom Coulombe gave the Treasurer’s Report which created some questions. The report was approved as given.

Rick James reported that the club should be receiving shortly the club-labeled covered hopper cars ordered from Accurail. The order was for 48 HO gauge cars which the club will sell for \$20 each. Club members made suggestions about ordering additional cars to have an inventory for shows and at the club for sale to club visitors.

Larry Cannon displayed the three cars he had painted and decaled with Great Falls Railroad logos. These cars were to be raffled off at the end of the meeting.

President James reported that the Executive Committee has approved the building of a closet in the entrance area where the **Bottles for Basics** box is located. Ed Leslie gave Tom Coulombe the architectural drawing of the plan for the closet. Rick also noted that the Owls Head Museum is

sponsoring their spring Mid-Coast Modeler’s Show on March 26 and 27. They have requested the club’s modular layout so that model railroad-ing can be featured as part of the modeler’s show. Because the show is more than just trains, it was felt that we could take some of the approximately 85 boxes of military and air plane models to sell at the show. The models are in 1:132, 1:135, and some 1:148 scale.

Terry King reported that about 65 percent of the current membership is receiving their newsletter by e-mail. This helps the club save postage expense. He also noted that he will still send out renewal notices by mail, but will no longer be sending return address envelopes with dues renewal notices.

Some club members indicated that they would be interested in renting a bus to go for one day to the West Springfield show. Jerry Johnston reported that after checking with many club members and the 3-Railers Club, he could find only about ten people willing to go by bus for one day. It takes at least 29 people paying \$47 each to cover the cost of the bus rental. Jerry said he has abandoned the rental idea and will not try it again. He did note that many club members plan to attend the show, and many will go for more than one day.

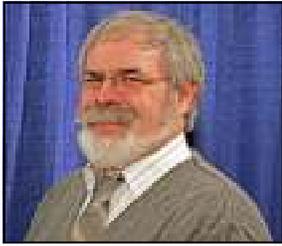
New member George Draper

was asked to draw the name for the Attendance Prize winner. Gregory Geagan from Orrington was the name selected. He was not present so the prize will be available for next month.

The meeting adjourned. After the meeting, the follow-up procedure from the October brainstorming session took place. (See the separate article about the Priorities for the Future elsewhere in this newsletter.)

While members were determining their priorities additional raffle tickets were sold for the three club-decaled cars which Larry Cannon had made. A drawing for the cars took place, and the winners were: Jerry Johnston, Travis Johnson, and Maurice Fortin.





Rick James

## President's Corner by Rick James

Some people may fall into the winter blues, but most of us train hobbyists look forward to this time of year. Between time spent clearing the driveway, we get to work on our own train layout or on the club layout. Yes, this is the train season! Some of you lucky people got to travel down to Springfield and see all the goodies the vendors had to offer. I hope to make the trip someday, but I needed to buy a new computer last month so there's no money for other toys this year.

At the last club meeting we re-

viewed the ideas from October's brainstorming session. The big vote-getter was mentoring new members and offering clinics to teach the basic skills of model railroading. That's a very good fit for the club and it's what we need to do to grow the hobby. There also seemed to be some concern about clubhouse security.

Many members would like to be able to purchase items to show that they belong to the club. At the last board meeting we talked about that and are working to get more items for the club store to add to the hats, vests, whistles and patches that we have now. There are club cars on order and, with any luck, they will be available for sale at the next club meeting.

If you have time to work on the club layout, come down either Wednesday nights or Saturday

mornings. The crew is always looking for help on projects on all the layouts. I'm sure someone will put you to work not long after you get here and will take the time to show you how to do the job. Be sure to check in to see what needs to be done, instead of starting any project randomly without asking first.

For those who need to get out and do some model train shopping, the next train show is coming up at the Augusta Armory on February 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. If you are bringing your modules, remember to be there between 7 and 8 a.m. to help set up the display. This is also a dollhouse show so there's a lot for everyone to look at. In the month of March, we have been invited to participate in a show at the Owl's Head Transportation Museum. That is a two-day event on March 26 and 27 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We will be having sales tables and setting up the modules to operate trains. Please keep those dates open as we will be needing help at both events.

## Members Choose Priorities by Paul Lodge

At the regular monthly meeting on January 20, club members "voted" for the items which they felt were most important for the club to pursue. The list had been compiled from ideas expressed during a brainstorming session at the October 21 monthly meeting.

At the October meeting, three areas were set up inside the building and a facilitator at each location was assigned a different major topic. Members rotated to each of the three group locations, where they had about twenty minutes to make suggestions. Their ideas were then written on large sheets of paper so that everyone could see them. At the end of the hour-long session, all the lists were brought to the meeting room and the facilitators commented on them.

Facilitators and volunteers formed small committees to go over the individual lists, develop three or

four of the suggestions they considered most important, and submit them to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee finalized these ideas for use at the January meeting.

It was noted that some of the brainstorming ideas were not included on these lists because they have already been accepted and/or started. Each club member present at the January meeting was given four stickers which they could use to indicate their choices on the lists displayed in separate locations around the meeting room. The following are the lists and the number of votes which the club members used to choose their priorities:

### MEMBERSHIP

- 9 Develop mentoring / apprenticeship program
- 21 Provide instruction / clinics for modeling layouts, etc.

- 4 Develop probation period for new members

### FUND-RAISING

- 13 Develop staffing for surplus asset sales
- 8 Hold open houses with surplus asset sales
- 3 Time fund-raising projects to avoid competing with each other

### OPERATIONS

- 6 Be responsible for your own equipment. What you bring in to operate, take home when you leave.
- 2 Share the rails. Let others run their equipment within a reasonable time.
- 7 Donate a certain amount of time for maintenance of the layout
- 13 Orientation: Explain do's and don'ts to new people

### BUILDING AND CLUB OPERATIONS

- 5 Raise capital to buy security cameras
- 4 Security system inside building
- 7 Enhance newsletter calendar—more long-range information
- 11 Plan group activities to get more participation



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### An Education Foundation

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## THE SIGNAL

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## Upcoming Events

February 19, Model Railroad Show, Augusta Armory, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

March 12 & 13, Bedford Boomers-NH Garden Railway Society  
[www.nhgrs.com](http://www.nhgrs.com)

March 12, Essex Junction, VT, Champlain Valley Fairgrounds  
[ronprio@aol.com](mailto:ronprio@aol.com)

March 19, Augusta, "O" Gauge Show, Elk's Club,

[hotelnorth@midmaine.com](http://hotelnorth@midmaine.com), 207-582-1410.

April 2, Gray, Me., Narrow Gauge Show Gray/New Gloucester High School, Bob Willard, 207-795-6476

April 10 west Lebanon NH Train



Show, Fireside Inn  
[www.cvr.railfan.net/cvmrr](http://www.cvr.railfan.net/cvmrr)

April 16, 2011, Model Railroad Show, Sanford ME 10:00—3:00

April 30, Model Railroad Show, Mt. Ararat High School, Topsham, Me., 10:00 to 3:00 p.m.

November 5, 2011 Model Railroad Show, Auburn Middle School 10:00—3:00.

