



# THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 13. ISSUE 10

MARCH 2012



Member since June 1988

**NEXT MEETING**  
**March 15**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**NEXT**  
**MONTH**  
**Deadline for**  
**April Issue**  
**March 24, 2012**

**MEMBERSHIP**  
**121**

**ATTENDANCE PRIZE**  
**Ed Webb's name**  
**was drawn to win**  
**and he was present**  
**to win.**

**Will your name be**  
**drawn on Mar. 15?**  
**You have to be**  
**present to win!**

**BOTTLES FOR**  
**BASICS**

- ◆ **LAST YEAR**  
**\$496.15**
- ◆ **YEAR TO DATE:**  
**\$269.45**
- ◆ **THIS MONTH:**  
**\$32.90**

## Visually Impaired Project by Paul Lodge

At our regular monthly meeting on April 19, club members who attend are going to learn special techniques for helping guests who come to the club and are blind or visually impaired. As part of our efforts as a 501c(3) Educational Foundation, trainers from the IRIS Network of Maine will train our members on how to conduct a tour of our facility safely.

It is hoped that an effort will be made in the future to encourage a visit to the club by those people in Maine who would like to have more familiarity with our hobby and trains in general. Just because someone is unsighted doesn't mean we can't share our hobby with them. Because we have a passion for our hobby, we want everyone to feel our enthusiasm whether they are blind or not.

Imagine being blind and having



New Adult Ed Class Photo by Paul Lodge

someone explain our hobby to them and let them feel the difference between a G-Gauge and an N-scale model. We could even make arrangements with a real railroad to let them go to an engine facility and use their senses to smell and feel the size and power of a real locomotive. Because of who we are, we can make this happen for a part of

our society who does not have the same opportunities we have.

If this event is publicized properly, other civic organization may be inspired to do something similar for other segments of our community.

Come to our club meeting on April 19 and learn something new.

## Farewell, Richard Obie by Paul Lodge

On Saturday morning, March 10, Terry Obie reported that her husband Richard Obie passed away during the night.

Richard was a faithful member of the club and attended as many functions as he could. At this year's Ex-TRAINaganza, Richard brought his keyboard and played music during the

event. Richard often commented on the value he placed on having the club be wheel chair accessible. He enjoyed coming to the meetings and watching the TRAIN TIME shows. Several of the TRAIN TIME shows became his favorites and he supported the club by purchasing several of them.

Even while he was at Androscoggin Hospice last month, Dick was sharing the railroading hobby by asking that a supply of Operation Lifesaver coloring books be brought in for the children who were there.

Our sympathies go out to Terry and the family. Richard will be missed.

On March 17, members who are already familiar with the layout will mentor members who have not had the chance to run trains on it. Many of you joined the club so that you could operate trains.

“Thank you” to all the club members who helped make our efforts a success.

## Operating Session by Paul Lodge

### OPERATING SESSION ON THE HO LAYOUT

On Saturday, March 17, HO Chairman Travis Johnson plans to have an operating session on the HO layout. Travis says he is trying to get back to the tradition of having an operating session on the Saturday after the regular monthly meeting just as we did at the layout on Canal Street Alley in Lewiston.

When we have special events at the club, members need to be familiar

with the layout and how to operate it effectively. Having more train operators will make it easier to run trains for and with our guests.

Having operating sessions now will also help us identify and correct problems as well as find proper methods of communicating throughout the layout.

On March 17, members who are already familiar with the layout will mentor members who have not had the chance to run trains on it. Many of you joined the club so that you could operate trains. Here is your chance to learn to

operate the layout and have fun running trains.



Photo by Dick Clark

## Augusta Show A Club Success by Paul Lodge

About twenty-five club members attended the Whitefield Lions Club Dollhouse and Train Show at the Augusta Armory on Saturday, February 18. The Great Falls Model Railroad Club displayed our large modular layout. Many people stopped to admire the fine detail of the three-dimensional art created by club members on the modules. Because this train show also features dollhouses, participants we do not usually see were curious about the model trains and the scenery details they might use for their dollhouse hobby. Club members were able to show people how we utilize dollhouse hobby supplies in our model railroading.

Denise and Bob Purington sold over \$100 worth of tick-

ets on the new raffle layout. Terry King reported that he was pleased with the sale of books from the excess inventory of the club’s library.

Operation Lifesaver had a table at the show, and club members helped with the exhibit.

“Thank you” to all the club members who helped make our efforts a success.



Photos by Terry King



## Hobo Holiday Plans Underway By Paul Lodge

In an effort to have more people enjoy our club's layouts, we will be sponsoring *Hobo Holiday* on Saturday, May 12. Several unique activities are planned to make *Hobo Holiday* different from the *ExTRAINaganza* in November and the *Train Fest* in August. Our resident "hobo," Jerry Johnston, is preparing Hobo brochures to be handed out to adults and children. These will include hobo folklore, hobo symbols, recipes for hobo stew, and train whistle signals. A scavenger hunt will encourage children and adults to investigate the entire building: the layouts, the library, and the crew room. A "fishing hole" will be set up where people can "hook" a prize. *Timesaver* layouts will be available for participants to practice switching ma-

neuevers. Tom Coulombe has acquired a train set which will be raffled off. The Executive Committee is open to additional suggestions to make this a truly memorable experience for all those who attend *Hobo Holiday*.

Plans are to have a "hobo jungle" in the parking area and provide a sample of "hobo stew" to our guests as they arrive. Club members are encouraged to help with the event by dressing up as hoboes and being part of the entertainment for our guests, who will also be encouraged to come dressed as hoboes.

Governor's, the club's official restaurant, has volunteered to hand out flyers about the event to their customers. Carlene Barnies, manager of Governor's Restaurant in Lewiston, is particularly

enthusiastic about *Hobo Holiday*.

The club needs to sponsor events like this because our membership dues do not cover the expenses of the building and its mortgage. The membership dues pay only about one-third of the cost of running the building. Some members contribute an extra donation beyond their dues to help make up the other two-thirds of the cost. Not all members are in a position to contribute money. Events like this give every member an opportunity to donate time and energy instead of cash. All club members and their contributions are necessary to continue to make **The Great Falls Model Railroad Club** a successful operation.

## Basswood Barn Raising by Paul Lodge

Club members have been requesting clinics on building models and other scenery items. Many have purchased tools which make it easier to build models and have put their new tools to good use.

Ed and Brenda Leslie have been teaching techniques for creating structures using basswood as the building material. Participants at the first clinic built a small shed and were encouraged to continue with a larger project. For their second clinic, each member constructed a barn, using the dimensions that Brenda had used for her replica of the barn on her parents' potato farm in Aroostook County.

The "Barn Raising" clinic was open to all club members on Saturday, February 25 and March 3. The project was

set up so that participants could continue to work on the barn at home between Saturday clinic sessions.

Brenda Leslie has made arrangements with club member Bob Willard to have a clinic on resin casting sometime this spring. An exact date will be announced later.

If you are interested in other aspects of modeling, Saturday clinics can be developed to match your interests. Ed and Brenda are club members for ideas of additional clinics they would like to attend.



Photo by Terry King



"Tom Coulombe gave the Treasurer's Report and talked about the importance of financial donations beyond the yearly dues. Tom also mentioned that there is a possibility that the club may purchase or receive donations of items from a layout in Cumberland.

## February Minutes by Paul Lodge

Before the meeting started, club members were treated to a slide presentation made by Ed Leslie showing pictures of club activities since the last meeting. The evening's *TRAIN TIME* program featured the "Largest Model Railroad in the World." Club members were treated to views of the Northlandz HO layout in Flemington, New Jersey.

After the shows, President Rick James opened the meeting and those present introduced themselves. Paul Lodge gave a summary of the February 11, Executive Committee Meeting, which included the following items:

**Security:** There are a lot of valuable supplies stored in the work room on the lower level. There was a suggestion that perhaps an additional security camera should be purchased to cover the work room area.

**Station Master Report:** While members attended the West Springfield Train show, it snowed. Tom Coulombe apologized that the driveway did not get plowed while he was away and the snow got packed down. We paid to have the driveway sanded.

**Activities Director,** Brenda Leslie noted the upcoming events which include the Rock Mold Clinic and the Movie Night on February 11, the train show in Augusta on February 18, the basswood clinic on February 25, and shows in April. In April or May, Bob Willard is willing to do a Saturday workshop on resin casting in April or May.

**Adult Ed Class:** Paul Lodge reported that the Model Railroad-ing Adult Education class has two

students from Auburn and eight are towns outside the Lewiston/Auburn area. There are three children taking the class with their fathers.

"Thank you" to all the club members who helped make our efforts a success.

**Club Member Information:** Terry King brought up the subject of giving out club member's names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses. The topic was discussed because of the confusion we have created at Craft Mania. It was felt that guidelines need to be set up to have an only one member authorized to give out club member information. It was noted that having e-mail addresses and telephone numbers on these lists and in the newsletter could be detrimental, and it was suggested to have that information removed from the newsletter. In order to clear up the confusion with Craft Mania, **a motion was made, and passed, to have the Treasurer issue a membership card to members for the purpose of receiving the discount at Craft Mania.** Current club members can ask Tom Coulombe for a card which Tom will issue.

**Club Policies:** President Rick James pledged to have a rough draft of the club policies at the next meeting.

**UNSTOPPABLE Poster:** Charlie Shumacher donated a movie poster (27 x 40) for *Unstoppable*. It was suggested that we purchase a frame before the February meeting so that the poster can be displayed.

**Donations:** "Thank you" to all the club members who helped make our efforts a success.

**Annual Awards:** It was suggested that recognition should be given to outstanding club members at the annual meeting in May.

**Mt. Ararat Show & Newsletter:** Terry King announced that starting next year Tom Coulombe has volunteered to organize and run the Mt. Ararat show in Topsham. Terry is also interested in training someone to publish the newsletter.

**Name Tags:** Brenda Leslie brought name tags to give out and said that she can order more pins for those who would like a good-looking name tag.

**Visually Impaired Project:** Paul Lodge gave an explanation of an initiative to expand the club's outreach by investigating ways to share railroading with visually impaired members of the community. At the April 19 club meeting, representatives from the Iris Network in Lewiston will come to the club and instruct club members on proper methods of working with the visually impaired.

Tom Coulombe gave the Treasurer's Report and talked about the importance of financial donations beyond the yearly dues. Tom also mentioned that there is a possibility that the club may purchase or receive donations of items from a layout in Cumberland. A motion was made and accepted by Jay Calnan that the Treasurer's Report be accepted.

(Continued on page 5)



# Minutes Continued

(Continued from page 4)

As Activities Director, Brenda Leslie listed upcoming events in which club members can participate. She mentioned the train show in Augusta on February 18 and the "Barn Raising" project on the G-gauge layout on Saturday, February 25. Club members who had participated in the "Scratch Building with Basswood" clinic wanted to have another clinic and build a larger structure. It was decided that they would build a farm barn at the next session. Brenda was also able to distribute name tags purchased by club members and took orders for additional name tags. Brenda reported that those who attended the "Movie Night" enjoyed the picture about hobos in the movie *Emperor of the North*.

When talking about the club layouts, Travis Johnson reported that the HO group is working on having better communication between members. They are at the point of

making decisions about future plans and projects in order to keep activities moving and coordinated. The layout now needs to be operated in order to find out how it performs. An operating session is scheduled for Saturday, March 17, from 8 a.m. to noon. A layout diagram is being produced to help with the operating session. Club members are encouraged to come and be train operators. Members who are already familiar with the layout will act as mentors for those who are novices. This is an attempt to get back to the tradition at the layout at Canal Street Alley when there was an operating session on the Saturday after the regular club meeting.

The G-scale group plans to meet on Saturday, February 25, to make decisions about future plans for the layout. The group hopes to create a permanent layout which will not have to be entirely changed for every event.

Terry King announced that he is looking for someone to take over the cre-

ating of the newsletter, *The Signal*. He would like to train someone who can bring a fresh approach to the publication. He noted that most of the club members now receive *The Signal* electronically and only about thirty copies need to be mailed each month.

Rick James said he would like to have a list of the club's policies ready for the next meeting. The meeting adjourned.

The attendance prize was won by Ed Webb. He selected one of the Operation Lifesaver hats. Dave Gilchrist won the 50/50 raffle.



The photo on the left shows Paul Lodge receiving a boxcar from Governor's Restaurant. This was taken by an employee of the restaurant. The photo above shows John Visco applying ballast. This photo was taken by Terry King



## THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

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**Our new e-mail address.**

### An Educational Foundation

#### MEETING POSTPONEMENTS

If severe weather threatens on a meeting night, Tom Coulombe will notify local television stations that the meeting will be postponed until the following week. This would make it the fourth Thursday of the month instead of the third. Club members who receive the newsletter via e-mail will be notified by e-mail about the postponement.

## OFFICERS:

#### President:

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## THE SIGNAL

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## Address Change

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## Upcoming Events

**March 15**, Membership Meeting 6:45 p.m.

**March 17**, Operating Session 8:00 a.m. to Noon.

**March 25-25**, Owl's Head Museum Hobby Show.

**April 12**, Executive Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.

**April 14**, Sanford Show at new location. 10:00 A.M. —2:30 P.M.

**April 19**, Membership Meeting 6:45 p.m. **Nominations.**

**April 28**, Train Show, Mt. Ararat High School, Topsham, ME. 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

**May 10**, Executive Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.

**May 12**, HOBO HOLIDAY

**May 17**, Membership Meeting—Elections. Peter McKenney guest speaker. 6:45 p.m.

**May 26**, Bob Willard is doing a clinic on resin casting. 9:00 a.m.

**June 14**, Executive Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.

**June 21**, Membership Meeting 6:45

**July 12**, Executive Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.

**July 19**, Membership Meeting 6:45 p.m.

**August 19**, Club picnic at Tom & Carmen Coulombe's.



**September 7-10, 2016**, 36th National Narrow Gauge Convention at Augusta, Me.

### UNSTOPPABLE by Paul Lodge

Club member Charlie Shumacher recently purchased two copies of the poster for the movie *Unstoppable*. Charlie donated one of the copies to the club. The *Unstoppable* poster has been framed and is on display at the club's entrance.

Thank you, Charlie for thinking of us.