



THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 13. ISSUE 12

APRIL 2012



Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING

April 19
7:00 p.m.

NEXT MONTH

Deadline for
April Issue
May 25, 2012

MEMBERSHIP

121

ATTENDANCE PRIZE

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

Will your name be drawn on April 19? You have to be present to win!

BOTTLES FOR BASICS

- ◆ LAST YEAR \$496.15
- ◆ YEAR TO DATE: \$277.40
- ◆ THIS MONTH: \$7.95

New Editor by Paul Lodge

HELPING WITH THE SIGNAL

Newsletter editor, Terry King, is looking for someone who is interested in being trained to publish the monthly newsletter. This also gives more members the opportunity to share in the club activities. Publishing the newsletter can be an important contribution by a club member who wishes to help and be more active.

Even though there are more than one hundred members in the club, we mail out only about thirty copies monthly. Most members receive their newsletter by e-mail and that saves the club a lot of money for postage.

If you would like to contribute some important time and talent to the club, let Terry know you

are interested in publishing *The Signal*.

Bottles for Basics by Paul Lodge

April is the last month of the club's fiscal year. We are looking for more bottles and cans to help us pay another light bill. Not everyone in the club is in a financial position to pledge additional funds beyond their annual dues. Most club members, however, can help by donating returnable bottles or cans to help the club pay for basic services such as elec-

tricity. **It takes 10,000 returnable bottles or cans to make \$500.** Last year we missed our goal by only 77 bottles and cans. **THANK YOU** to all of those who "CANTRIBUTED".

Who can identify where on the layout this is? Answer at the meeting.



John Visco is modeling Bates mills in this area.

Photos by Terry King.



The round house area that Howard Palmer, Don Lush and Ed Fournier are working on.



After the children left for their next activity, more residents were brought into the room to enjoy the trains and the *TRAIN TIME* videos being shown on the large TV screen. They especially liked the "Trains in Snow" episode showing the snow plow at Danville Junction and Greene.

Clover Manor by Paul Lodge

Jim Parker, Activity Director and Sandi Robbin, Activity Coordinator from Clover Manor recently invited the club to bring the raffle layout exhibit to their Minot Avenue location for their residents to enjoy. On Tuesday morning, April 10, the layout was set up and people started coming to see the trains in operation. Many of them told stories about their younger years when they frequently rode the trains. It is difficult Clover Manor has difficulty finding activities which will appeal to men. Model railroading is a hobby many men (and women) still enjoy.

There is a pre-school

housed at Clover Manor, and the twenty children were invited to see the trains. In addition, the children saw the Sly Fox and Birdie movie about railroad safety. Many of the older residents watched the movie with the children.

After the children left for their next activity, more residents were brought into the room to enjoy the trains and the *TRAIN TIME* videos being shown on the large TV screen. They especially liked the "Trains in Snow" episode showing the snow plow at Danville Junction and Greene.

Rose Thurston is still a resident at Clover Manor and she always shows up to say hello and talk to us. By coincidence April 10 was

third anniversary of the day that Al Thurston died in 2009. Rose made a special effort to look nice this day. She commented that she enjoys *The Signal*, which she gets monthly, and noted how active we are. Her husband Al Thurston and Wally Chase of Lewiston were instrumental in starting the fall model railroad show in Auburn which our club has continued.



Owls Head Museum Show by Paul Lodge

Many club members attended the Owls Head Transportation Museum show for model enthusiasts on Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25. This event is different from a typical train show in that features all kinds of models. Miniature air planes, helicopters, racing cars, ships, and trains have been exquisitely created by people who are interested in different aspects of the model building hobby.

The Great Falls Model Railroad Club had a large layout which included modules from Ed and Brenda Leslie, Travis Johnson, Jerry Johnston, Tom Coulombe, and others. In addition to the modular layout, the club had a display table full of models built by Ed and Brenda Leslie. An O-

gauge "Live Steam" exhibit also created a lot of interest.

Larry Cannon was on hand on Saturday to sell railroad books and excess inventory. Bob and Denise Purington sold tickets on this year's raffle layout. Show goers also had an opportunity to buy raffle tickets for the Hobo Holiday train set.

Club members were allowed to set up the display on Friday, March 23. Ed and Brenda Leslie, Tom and Carmen Coulombe, and Jerry Johnston set up the modular layout and stayed at a nearby hotel for the weekend. This mini-vacation saved them a lot of the time and expense of traveling.

About fifteen club members participated at the Owls Head Transportation Museum. The museum, located near Rockland, was started in 1974 as a non-profit organization and relies on volunteers for

most of its financial backing. In addition to special events such as this show for modeling enthusiasts, the museum houses large collections of historical transportation treasures, including many full-scale replicas. More information about the museum is available on their website.



Travis Johnson is working on the intermodal area of the layout.

Photo by Terry King

Hobo Holiday May 12 By Paul Lodge

On Saturday, May 12, the club will host its first *Hobo Holiday*. Plans are underway to create a festive atmosphere for children and adults to come to the club and run trains while learning about hobo culture. Jerry Johnston (aka Hobo) has designed a special handout which includes information about hobo folklore, hobo signs, hobo stew and its recipe, and how to make a hobo cook stove. These handouts will be distributed during the event. A “hobo jungle” will be created in the parking lot, where visitors will be served a sample of “hobo stew.” If “Hobo” Johnston makes the stew, you know it will be tasty.

Inside the building, guests will be able to run trains, visit the library, and get involved in other planned activities. Jeff

and Beth Chaffee will be displaying one of their layouts in the classroom area on the lower level. A scavenger hunt is being designed which will require participants to visit all the rooms in the club house in order to discover the items for which they are searching.

At the train show in Augusta, the club purchased a Lionel Budweiser Train Set which will be raffled off that day. Raffle tickets are being sold at all our functions leading up to the May 12 event. The original selling price for the Lionel train set was \$499, and we were able to purchase it for \$100. We will be selling tickets at the Owls Head Museum, the Sanford Train Show, our show at Mt. Ararat, at club meetings, and at the *Hobo Holiday*.

Governor’s, the club’s official restaur-

ant, will be helping to promote *Hobo Holiday* by distributing flyer information at the restaurant.



Next Meeting by Paul Lodge

NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR US AT NEXT CLUB MEETING

As a 501c(3) Educational Foundation, our club teaches others about railroading and railroad safety. We offer classes in model railroading through Auburn Adult Education, and our club has an extensive library of railroad artifacts, magazines, books, slide pictures, and train videos. All of these efforts help us to spread the joy of model railroading. At the April 19th meeting, club members will be receiving a valuable learning experience presented by Aisha Hixon and Samantha Green of the Iris Network.

Representatives from the Iris group will be on hand to demonstrate proce-

dures which will help visually impaired people to negotiate our building and enjoy our displays. This is an effort to expand the vision of our club to those who might not otherwise be able to see what we are doing. As an all-inclusive club, we want to be able to share the “World’s Greatest Hobby” with everyone.

After club members have been trained, we will arrange with the Iris Network for a group of visually impaired guests to come to the club to experience our hobby. We will make an effort to share with them our enthusiasm about trains and the hobby of model railroading. The St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad will also be contacted to help expand the knowledge of the visually impaired. By visiting the SL&A facility in Auburn and going through the engine house, participants will use senses other than sight to experience the sounds and smells of the large locomotives. Imag-

ine the excitement of those involved in this activity as they have such an unusual opportunity. How does one describe a rainbow to someone who has never had sight? The “unseen rainbow” may be one type of vision, but touching, smelling, and hearing both model and real trains is something we can help them to experience and appreciate.





March 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* show was "Trains in Snow." Dick Clark and Larry Cannon were the primary videographers for this show which featured spectacular snow plow scenes photographed by both Dick and Larry on the same day at different locations.

President Rick James opened the meeting and asked for the report from the Executive Committee meeting. Paul Lodge summarized the following report:

Auburn Mayor Jonathan Labonte was asked by Stephen Martelli to give the Executive Board an idea of what is being proposed for the New Auburn area for recreational paths. After his presentation, Tom Coulombe told Mayor Labonte that the club plans to use the upper portion of our property for parking. It needs to be entered through the Sixth Street location because there is a steep embankment and curb on Fifth Street. The curb on Fifth Street is a problem. Mayor Labonte gave Tom the name of the person to get in touch with to clear the curb for an entrance. When Mayor Labonte had finished with his presentation, Stephen Martelli gave him a tour of the building.

Treasurer's Report: Tom Coulombe gave the Treasurer's Report, which was accepted as reported. It was suggested that Tom use the pie charts again at the annual meeting to explain the income sources and expenses of the club. It worked well last time. It was further suggested that the pie-chart technique could be used quarterly. Tom was also asked to give club mem-

bers an update on the progress being made on paying down the mortgage. Tom reported that about twenty percent of the pledges have been received. An appointment has been set up with Cross Insurance to check on our insurance coverage.

The club has purchased Hydrocal from the manufacturer. Terry King suggested that we fill one-gallon containers with Hydrocal and sell them at shows.

As **Station Master**, Tom Coulombe reported that Tom Jones has donated wood and homasote from his layout which is being torn down. He noted that some bookcases are available and can be picked up by club members at the monthly meeting.

Although the purchase of a security camera was authorized, the camera has not yet been bought because of lack of funds. Tom noted that the outside lights are not functioning properly and the electronic eye on two of them may need to be checked.

Because club members sometimes ask to purchase supplies and model railroad equipment, it was felt that a policy needs to be put into place to clarify what can be sold. **A motion was made, and accepted, that the Station Master will have the authority to determine what club materials are available for sale as surplus assets.**

Activities Director Brenda Leslie reported that there have been two Saturday clinics for building a barn from basswood. A third class

will be held on Saturday, April 7, to finish the "barn raising" project. Peter McKenney will be our guest speaker, talking about the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad at the club meeting on May 17. Bob Willard will conduct a clinic on resin casting on Saturday, May 26. The club summer picnic will be held at Tom and Carmen Coulombe's on Sunday, August 19, after the Saturday Train Fest during the Balloon Festival. Ed and Brenda are looking into the possibility of having another campout in the Mount Blue area with a visit to the Sandy River and Rangeley Lakes Railroad.

Layout Reports: Travis Johnson brought a proposal for the ocean-front extension of the **HO layout** into the workshop area. **Terry King made a motion, which passed, to accept the proposed layout extension.** Jerry Johnston noted that a mural-type backdrop is being planned for that area. Travis reported that the first club operating session is planned for Saturday, March 17 from 8 a.m. to noon. The purpose of the session is to familiarize club members with the layout and to find problems which need to be corrected before the Hobo Holiday event. Having an operating session on the Saturday after the club's monthly meeting will now continue on a regular basis, reviving the old tradition. Helping out with the operating session will be Roger Plummer and Gary Thibeault.

Ed Leslie reported that Ken Nettleship is replacing Dick Clark as the chairman of the **G-gauge Division**. The group is looking into the idea of using some O-

(Continued on page 5)

Minutes Continued

(Continued from page 4)

scale equipment on a mountain scene along the wall of the layout to give it a little depth.

Hobo Holiday: Jerry Johnston came to the meeting prepared with handouts and an outline of proposals for the Hobo Holiday event. There was much discussion and members were assigned projects which will be used at the Hobo Holiday. It was decided to expand the Hobo Holiday Train Set Raffle to the three events the club has scheduled before the May 12 Hobo Holiday event. Tickets on the Train Set Raffle will be \$2 for one ticket and \$5 for three tickets.

Tom Coulombe reported that the Owls Head Museum will be open from 3 to 5 p.m. on Friday, March 23, so that we can set up our modular display for the weekend.

Club Brochures: It was noted that we need to have a supply of club brochures. Rick James said he would look into having them printed by a friend of his.

Jay Calnan donation: Jay Calnan is willing to donate a drafting table which can be used as a dispatcher's

table during operating sessions. Paul Lodge volunteered to bring a sheet of metal which can be used with magnets for the dispatching board.

The Executive Committee Report was approved as given.

Updates on the club layouts were then given. Ken Nettleship reported that the G-Gauge Division plans to use some O-Scale trains in a mountain setting to create depth perception. Tom Coulombe reported that Benton Hayes and Dennis Ring have volunteered to work on the N-Scale layout. Travis Johnson reported that the HO Group is planning to have an operating session on the Saturday after the monthly club meeting every month from now on. He would like to get all the "bugs" worked out before the **Hobo Holiday** event. He noted that some switches still have not been wired, but the main line is done. Club members were asked to bring in NCE hand controllers if they have them so that more trains can be run at one time.

Jerry Johnson made a presentation about the **Hobo Holiday**. He distributed a handout about hobo symbols, hobo cooking stove, and a recipe for Hobo Stew. He asked that club members look at it and make suggestions of anything else which should be included. Jerry also explained activities planned for

the special event. There will be a Lionel train set raffle. Tickets on the set will be sold at our next three events: the Owls Head Museum, Sanford Train Show, and the club's Mt. Ararat show in Topsham.

Bob Willard spoke about the plans for the Narrow Gauge Show on March 31 at the Gray/New Gloucester High School. Crafters from around New England will be there and clinics will take place all day.

Rick James has selected members for the Nominating Committee for next year's officers and board members. The committee is Bob Purington, Howard Palmer, and Ed Fournier.

Rick James suggested that awards be given at the annual meeting in May to recognize outstanding contributions of club members.

During the opening slide presentation, Ed Leslie had shown pictures of this year's garden show in Portland. He would like to our club get more involved next year. It is a good place to make contact with hundreds of people and hand out club brochures to people who are interested in model railroading and might be potential club members. He also suggested that Operation Lifesaver could be represented at the show.

After the meeting adjourned, the 50/50 raffle winner was drawn. Bob Purington won the 50/50 raffle. The Attendance Prize was won for the second month in a row by Ed Webb, who chose a Downeaster train mug.

To Dye Sawdust by Jerry Johnston

+ Use sifted softwood sawdust. Hardwood doesn't dye well.

+ Liquid RITE© dye works best. Dry dye works just as well but it is tricky to get correct proportion.

+ Bring 2.5 quarts of water to a steam.

+ Add .25 cup table salt when adding water.

+ If using Kelly green Rite© dye add two good tablespoons of dye.

+ Stir well and if steaming turn off heat.

+ Add 5 cups of dry sifted sawdust and stir to wet all sawdust.

+ Let steep for 10 minutes.

+ Strain water and press "dry" and spread on newspaper.

Change newspaper in an hour. Stir every 12 hours until dry.

Proportions: Two cups water to each cup sawdust. 1.25 teaspoons of dye to each cup sawdust.

By: Jerry Johnston, BsCH 2/12/12



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.

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THE SIGNAL

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Address Change

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Upcoming Events



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.

April 21, Operating session 8:00 a.m.to Noon.

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

June 23, Operating session 8:00 a.m. to Noon.

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

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

July 21, Operating session 8:00 a.m. to Noon.

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

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



Some of the almost eighty trees ready to be installed on the layout.

We will need hundreds more.

Photo by Terry King