



THE SIGNAL



THE GREAT FALLS MODEL RAILROAD CLUB

VOLUME 13. ISSUE 12

MAY 2012



Member since June 1988

NEXT MEETING
May 17
7:00 p.m.

NEXT MONTH
Deadline for June Issue
May 25, 2012

MEMBERSHIP
116

ATTENDANCE PRIZE

Three names were drawn and no one was present to win.

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

BOTTLES FOR BASICS

- ◆ LAST YEAR \$496.15
- ◆ YEAR TO DATE: \$320.86
- ◆ THIS MONTH: \$43.46
- ◆ \$43.46

Visually Impaired by Paul Lodge

Samantha Green, a vision rehabilitation therapist from the Lewiston Career Center, and Aisha Hixon, a certified therapeutic recreation specialist from the Iris Network in Bangor, presented a training session at the April 19 meeting of The Great Falls Model Railroad Club in Auburn. They explained and demonstrated proper procedures and techniques for helping people who are visually impaired. After club members completed a questionnaire about visually handicapped people and discussed their answers, the guests showed a 12-minute video illustrating the right and wrong ways to help visually handicapped people. Some club members were then given special goggles that simulate different kinds of visual impairment and were led around the building by other club members.

The club building is handicapped

accessible, and we want to encourage everyone to experience the joys of model railroading despite any personal handicap. This was the first step in the process of inviting visually impaired guests to come to the club and enjoy *America's Favorite Hobby*.



Former St. Laurence & Atlantic unit now leased to Pan Am Railroad.

Photo by Terry King.

At a future date, people who are visually impaired will receive invitations to come for a special day at the club. Local railroads will be approached to participate in the event so that these guests can compare their experience with model railroads to the feel and smell associated with real railroads.

Power Team Being Created by Paul Lodge

Obtaining enough funds to pay for the expenses of the club building is an on-going project. Many club members have pledged additional funds to help pay for the non-railroad expenses of heat, electricity, water and sewer, upkeep of the building, and property taxes. As an all-

inclusive club, we will always have members who are not in a financial position to pledge additional funds beyond the annual dues. **Bottles for Basics** is one way nearly everyone has been helping with the club's routine monthly expenses. Since the money earned

from returnable bottles and cans covers only a small amount of the building expenses, a new fund-raiser has been developed: **THE POWER TEAM**.

The **POWER TEAM** has been created to provide a

Our club has a major impact on the number of presentations to be made because we have seven club members who are certified Operation Lifesaver presenters and we are in the southern part of the state.

We are a railroad club, and we care!

With the introduction of the **POWER TEAM** at the April 19 meeting, one club member donated \$150, three donated \$50, and four pledged \$25. Any club members or friends of the club who would like to contribute to the **POWER TEAM** and have their names on this year's poster can contact Treasurer Tom Coulombe and tell him the amount you would like to pledge.

Operation Lifesaver Meeting by Paul Lodge

On Thursday, April 26 at 10 a.m., Maine Operation Lifesaver held its monthly meeting at The Great Falls Model Railroad Club. Members of the club have been especially helpful to Maine Operation Lifesaver this winter as more presentations are needed along the railroad corridor between Portland and Brunswick. The *Downeaster* will start running on that line later this year. These passenger trains will be running faster than the Pan Am freights which have been using that corridor and there will be

more of them. It is expected that the *Downeaster* will have three trips a day to and from Brunswick. The rails, bridges, signals, and road crossings have been upgraded so that the trains can run faster and more safely. Our club has a major impact on the number of presentations to be made because we have seven club members who are certified Operation Lifesaver presenters and we are in the southern part of the state.

We are a railroad club, and we care!

Joe Landry, an OL presenter from Lewiston who attended this meeting, built the caboose which

was used for many local events in the past. Operation Lifesaver could not afford the upkeep on the caboose and donated it to the Brooks Historical Society to use as an attraction at their facility. The Brooks Historical Society has offered to bring the caboose to Lewiston in November for the *Parade of Lights* which goes through Lewiston and Auburn. Many people know that Joe Landry has a fabulous Lionel layout in his basement, along with displays of many non-railroad collectibles.

After the meeting, eight of the OL members had lunch at Governor's Restaurant before heading home.



Photos
by
Paul
Lodge



Power Team Continued

way to pay for the electricity bill, which averages about \$150 a month. At the April 19 club meeting, the **POWER TEAM** concept was introduced. Some people like to know exactly what their extra donation is going to pay for. A contribution of \$150 will pay one month's electricity bill. Those who can afford \$150 will have their names written on the **POWER TEAM** poster next to one of the twelve months. Some members may be able to give \$50 for the **POWER TEAM**. In that case, three names will be

placed beside the month to make the \$150. For those who can donate \$25, six names will be written next to one of the months. When all the months have been completed, the club will have received an additional \$1,800 to help pay the electricity bill for the year and help balance the budget.

With the introduction of the **POWER TEAM** at the April 19 meeting, one club member donated \$150, three donated \$50, and four pledged \$25. Any club members or friends of the club who would like to contribute to the **POWER TEAM** and have their names on this year's poster can contact

Treasurer Tom Coulombe and tell him the amount you would like to pledge. Members or friends can also send a check and their names will be added to the **POWER TEAM** poster. Anonymous donations will also be accepted.

Remember, these extra contributions help keep the annual membership dues low enough so that we can encourage membership from those who otherwise might not be able to join an outstanding model railroad club like ours.

Be charitable and generous. Thanks!

Hobo Holiday May 12 By Paul Lodge

Newspaper articles, signs, flyers, cable access station promos, and a large poster at Governor’s Restaurant in Lewiston have been completed as part of the efforts to promote Hobo Holiday on May 12. Customers at Governor’s Restaurant are receiving information sheets about Hobo Holiday along with the checks for their meals. Excitement has been building as we near the first celebration of this fund-raising event.

The special Hobo Handout created by Jerry (Hobo) Johnston is now complete and ready to be distributed. Stephen Martelli is making the Hobo Cook Stove and preparing the Hobo Jungle. Members who are comfortable with the idea are asked to dress up like hoboes to help add to the festive atmosphere of the

event. We are all looking forward to seeing the happy hoboes.

The G-Gauge, N-Scale, and HO layouts will all be in operation. Beth and Jeff Chaffee will have two of their stand-alone layouts on display in the classroom area on the lower level at the clubhouse. A *Hobo Hunt* is being created so that guests can participate in a scavenger hunt, looking for specific details throughout the building.

We hope to learn from this first Hobo Holiday and add even more fun activities for future Hobo Holiday events.



Mt. Ararat Show by Paul Lodge

More than thirty-five Great Falls Model Railroad Club members participated in this year’s Topsham show at Mt. Ararat High School. On Friday afternoon at 4 o’clock, several members went to Mt. Ararat High School to help unload and set up dealer tables so they would be ready for Saturday morning. The club trailer with its modules and excess inventory was also unloaded. On Saturday, several of the modules from this spring’s adult education class were added to help create a large HO layout. In addition to all the usual displays, a G-Gauge double helix displayed in the middle of the gymnasium was a big hit. This double helix layout was first displayed at the Sanford show on April 14. This year’s attendance included many families with children ranging in ages from a few months old to teenagers. The unusual “Egg Liners” were an eye-catching feature, and the children loved watching them.

The Mt. Ararat Sports Booster Club had a good problem: they ran out of food and had to send out for additional supplies. Many of the dealers and customers had started buying food before the normal lunch time. The kitchen was quickly resupplied and sales continued.

It seemed as though all the “customers” walked out of the show with a bag in their hands. The show is always a success if the show goers can leave with a purchase.

Thanks to all the club members who

helped make the Topsham show a success.



Photos, by Paul Lodge



Paul Lodge explained a new fund-raising activity approved by the Executive Committee. The club is creating a **POWER TEAM**. In order to fill some of the financial gap, club members were asked to pledge money to help pay the monthly electricity bill. The average monthly power bill is about \$150 a month or \$1,800 a year. If twelve members pledge \$150 each to pay for one month's bill, it would go a long way to balancing the budget.

April Minutes by Paul Lodge

At 6:45 p.m. Ed Leslie presented a slide program featuring pictures of club activities since the last meeting.

Club members who attended this meeting were privileged to have a presentation by Samantha Green and Aisha Hixon of the Iris Network for their community connections project. They coached us in ways to help visually impaired people who might come to the club to experience the layouts. Their presentation included a series of "True/False" questions and a video about right and wrong ways to approach visually handicapped people. Some members put on goggles which simulated different kinds of visual impairments and then were guided around the building by other club members. Generally, one percent of a community will be visually impaired or blind, and the most helpful thing we can do is simply ask, "How can I help you?"

At 8 p.m. President Rick James opened the monthly meeting. Members were asked to introduce themselves because this was the first meeting for some people. Sandy Sondheim's grandson from the Philippines came from the longest distance.

Paul Lodge, Secretary, gave a summary of this month's Executive Committee report which was approved as given:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

April 12, 2012

Present: Rick James, Ed Leslie, Paul Lodge, Tom Coulombe, Terry King, Stephen Martelli, Roger Allen, and Jay Calnan. Brenda Leslie and Travis Johnson were also present.

HO Layout Extension: Before starting their meeting, the Executive Committee went to the lower level to view the peninsula on which John Visco plans to create the Bates Mill complex. The HO group wanted permission to extend the peninsula by less than two feet and have a rounded end on it. John hopes that other club members will join him in creating and scenicking this area and will make suggestions for other parts of the layout. The Executive Committee went back upstairs and started the meeting. **Terry King made a motion, which was approved, that permission be granted for the extension of the peninsula.**

Hobo Holiday Event: Jerry Johnston reported on the progress for the Hobo Holiday event.

Jerry is also creating a new club brochure and distributed copies for approval and suggestions. Rick James has a printer friend who can make copies for about twenty-five cents each.

Rick James also suggested inviting Museum L/A to partner with us in sharing historic pictures and other railroad artifacts. He also suggested asking Time-Warner about setting up a voice mail account so the club could receive inquiries and other communications without installing a telephone at the club.

The **Secretary's Report** was approved as summarized.

Treasurer's Report : Tom Coulombe gave an extensive Treasurer's Report which included a proposed budget for the next fiscal year. He noted that the club still needs to find additional money-making projects in order to continue to build layouts. Brenda Leslie asked about the Power Team fund-raising project which was mentioned a year ago. Paul Lodge reported that he was asked not to proceed with the project at that time, but he will start the promotion again since this Executive Committee approves the concept. The Treasurer's Report was approved as given.

Station Master Report: As Station Master, Tom Coulombe reported that he will have the boiler inspected and that some electrical projects still need to be completed. On the lower level, light switches will be moved to the wall near the refrigerator and to the wall by the stairs. The outdoor outlet still needs to be installed. **A motion was made and accepted to give Howard Palmer a key.**

Activity Directors Report: Activities Director Brenda Leslie reported that Peter McKenney will be the guest speaker at the annual meeting on May 17. Bob Willard will give a clinic on resin casting on Saturday, May 26 at 9 a.m. Another "Slide & Dine" event might be planned if there is more interest from club members. A sample slide show to replace the usual *Train Time* video at the club meeting would help members see how interesting a slide show can be. **Awards Wall:** The "Awards Wall" concept was mentioned

(Continued on page 5)

Minutes Continued

(Continued from page 4)

and President Rick James suggested having a plaque with the names of the presidents for the first twenty-five years of the club. The Recognition Committee needs to meet and prepare some recommendations to be considered by the Executive Committee.

Layout Reports: Ed Leslie reported that Ken Nettleship is the new Chairman for the G-Gauge Division. The G-Gauge group will have a meeting on April 21. An O-Scale locomotive has been donated. The group plans to participate more in the club's fund-raising efforts. Ed reported that there would be a G-Gauge double helix display at the Sanford show and that club signs on the display would give credit to The Great Falls Model Railroad Club.

Travis Johnson reported for the HO Layout. There will be an operating session on Saturday, April 21. There will be an effort to improve communication while running the layout. A metal panel will be cut and a track plan placed on it so that the dispatcher can use magnets to direct trains more efficiently. Some suggestions have been made to name certain locations after former (or deceased) club members. **Terry King made a motion, which passed, that the name of any past or present member used to identify a location on the layout must be approved by the Executive Committee.**

Tom Coulombe noted that more scenery is being put on the N-Scale layout and that a roundhouse is being built.

Show Signs: Stephen Martelli reported that the City of Auburn has given approval for the club to put signs in the park next to Rolly's

Diner during the coming year for the Hobo Holiday, Train Festival, and EX-TRAINaganza.

Chamber of Commerce: This month the facility for the Chamber of Commerce monthly breakfast meeting was filled before we submitted our reservations. Next month we will be first in line and we will promote our Hobo Holiday event.

Visually Impaired Project: Paul Lodge expressed some minor concerns about the logistics for the training at our April monthly meeting. We will need to be cooperative in making the training run efficiently so that we can get through it as quickly as possible. There will be no video in order to allow time for the training.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned.

Tom Coulombe gave the Treasurer's Report, which included the proposed budget for the next year. He pointed out that pledges have been going down at about a \$1,000 dollars a year for the past three years and this year the Sanford show netted about \$1,000 less than last year. We need to acquire more excess inventory to sell at shows and find additional fund-raising activities to cover the financial gap. After a brief discussion, the Treasurer's Report was approved as given

Tom Coulombe reported that our show at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham will be Saturday, April 28. On Friday, April 27, the tables will arrive at about 4 p.m. We have permission to set up tables and modules from 4 to 6 p.m. In addition to our own layout, Tom indicated that the 3-Railers, Boothbay Railroad Museum, and N-Scalers will have layouts at the show.

LAYOUT REPORTS: The HO Layout group reported that there will probably not be an operating session on Saturday, April 21, because of a problem with power to the switch machines. The various electrical stations need to be turned on in a special sequence. The electrical problem

may have been caused by someone turning on the system in the wrong sequence. Members are asked not to turn on the system unless they know the proper procedure.

Ken Nettleship reported that the G-Gauge Division will have a meeting on Saturday, April 21, to discuss activities for the next phase of construction.

Tom Coulombe reported that the N-scale layout will have an industrial area. By November it should be running on a DCC system.

Jerry Johnston provided some insight into the Hobo Holiday scheduled for Saturday, May 12. Lunch will be provided for those who help with this new fund-raising project. Those who come are asked to dress like a hobo if they feel comfortable doing that. Club members should park off the grounds so that our guests will have a place to park.

Although the Nominating Committee usually submits at the April meeting its list of officers for the next year, the list was not given. Larry Cannon made a motion, which passed, to communicate the nominations to club members in the most efficient method before next month's meeting.

Paul Lodge explained a new fund-raising activity approved by the Executive Committee. The club is creating a **POWER TEAM**. In order to fill some of the financial gap, club members were asked to pledge money to help pay the monthly electricity bill. The average monthly power bill is about \$150 a month or \$1,800 a year. If twelve members pledge \$150 each to pay for one month's bill, it would go a long way to balancing the budget. A poster will be created to show those who have pledged and how many months still need to be covered. Since many members could not afford a donation of \$150, pledges of \$50 or \$25 will be accepted and several people will be given credit for a month's electric bill.

After the meeting adjourned, the Attendance Prize drawing was held. Three names were drawn and none of them were present: Travis Bragg, Chuck Horton, and Dave Kierstead.



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:

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THE SIGNAL

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Upcoming Events



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.



Our truck. Photo by Paul Lodge

Nomination of Officers

President—Ed Leslie
Vice-President—David Kierstead
Treasurer—Thomas Coulombe
Secretary—Paul Lodge
Director—Roger Allen
Director—Jay Calnan
Director—Travis Johnson

At the next meeting on May 17, nominations will be opened from the floor, followed by the election. Your dues must be current in order to vote.