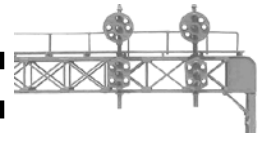


THE SIGNAL BRIDGE



Volume 16

NEWSLETTER OF THE MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS CLUB
JUNE 2009 ISSUE

Number 6

From the Conductor's Desk...

CLUB OFFICERS

President:

Fred Alsop

Vice-President:

John Carter

Secretary:

Art Daniels

Treasurer:

Duane Swank

Newsletter Editor:

Ted Bleck-Doran

Webmaster:

John Edwards

LOCATION

ETSU Campus, George L.
Carter Museum

HOURS

Business Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meetings start at 7:00 PM at ETSU Campus, Brown Hall Science Bldg, Room 312, Johnson City, TN.

- A social gathering is held prior to the business meeting at *EL TORITO* on State of Franklin near ETSU in the Kroger Plaza starting at 5:45 PM. Visitors and those interested in joining MEMRR are invited to attend.

- Work nights are held weekly on Thursday evenings starting at 4:30 PM and lasting until ???

- Open viewing and operating layout is available every Saturday from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM.

PHOTO CONTEST HONORABLE MENTION RECIPIENTS



This month we feature the recipients of **Honorable Mention** in the **1st Annual MEMRR Photo Contest**. Top photo is by **Fred Alsop**; Bottom photo is by **Gary Rabetoy**; Third Honorable Mention was submitted by **Ted Bleck-Doran** and can be found in the Railfan Trip Survey form on page 4.

MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS

May 19, 2009

Meeting Minutes

The May 19th meeting of the Mountain Empire Model Railroaders was called to order by President Fred Alsop at 7:05 P.M.

Officers Reports:

Newsletter Editor:

The meeting began with the recognition of the winner of the photo contest, Geoff Stunkard.

Webmaster:

The web report was given by John Edwards, who stated that there were no new developments concerning the club's web page.

Vice-President:

The programs for the June and July meetings will be done by Jim Millhorn on airbrush painting locos and rolling stock. Jim has graciously offered two cars to each member to paint as long as they inform him of their choice of cars prior to the June and July meetings. Members, however, must bring their own decals and numbering for the cars. President Alsop also stated that a program is needed for the August meeting if any member is interested in presenting one.

Old Business:

Room Renovations: the new room renovations were completed and are ready to be utilized.

New G-Gauge Equipment: The Dollywood G-scale has been donated and will be installed in the kids room; however, some of the locomotives are worn and in desperate need of repair. If any members have any G-scale parts or expertise to lend or donate, it would be greatly appreciated.

Donated HO Layout: The moving of the Rabetoy layout is set to take place on May 21st and several members volunteered.

Summer Picnic: Tom and Carolyn McKee will host a club picnic on Saturday June 27th; the time was tentatively set at 5 or 5:30. Members, spouses or significant others are welcome as long as

Tom and Carolyn are informed for planning purposes. This concluded the old business.

New Business:

Digitrax Purchase: John Edwards recommended the club purchase the Digitrax Zephyr programming system. A motion was made and seconded to open a discussion as to the club purchasing this system. John Edwards stated that this system would operate as a stand-alone system with its own programming track. This system would make programming locomotives, such as Broadway Limited BlueLine, much more user-friendly. The system runs about \$200, though the club can procure one for approximately \$150. A motion was made that the club explore the option of purchasing a Zephyr system. This passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Public Service Announcements: Lyle Montieth informed the club that public service announcements were running on Comcast cables locale public service, and that the club might want to look into finding if the cable networks in the Tri-Cities area might also have free public service announcements.

Layout Reports:

N-Scale: The wiring on the N-scale layout continues with great progress being made in both speed control and the length of the consists run.

HO-Scale: On the HO scale the roundhouse is 80% complete, with the exception of the detail for the interior stall, which has not yet arrived.

G-Scale: The G-scale seems to be running normally, however, some members noticed that the locomotive slowed in one location on the track. Help will be needed in diagnosing and repairing the problem.

Program:

The meeting concluded with John Carter's program on advanced tips and tools for laying and tending track. The meeting was adjourned shortly after 9:00 P.M.

Minutes taken and submitted by Jesse Kittle



FROM THE ENGINEER'S SIDE OF THE CAB: Summer is upon us and we had lots of visitors associated with the Blue Plum

Festival the first Saturday in June. Allan Morton put some of our "train show" signs out on the State of Franklin that day as well which probably pulled some additional visitors in. We also had publicity in support of the Festival in the newspapers and on the campus radio station that week. We should make it a point to have one of our Saturday volunteers be responsible each week for putting a few of those signs along the State of Franklin to attempt to boost attendance and then collect them at the end of the running day.

What is summertime without picnics? We have a big one planned for the membership/spouses/significant others. Tom and Carolyn McKee extended an invitation last month to the MEMRR to come to their terrific home on the Boone Lake for a club picnic and to see Tom's outstanding garden railway. The outing is scheduled for 5:00 p.m., Saturday, June 27th. The McKees are providing everything; location, food, drinks, outdoor railroading, etc., **but to attend you have to let one of the MEMRR officers know your plans so we can give our hosts an accurate headcount.** We are asking

you to limit your party to two merrymakers. Secretary Art Daniels will compile the final list and we will be turning that into the McKees on Friday, June 19th. You won't want to miss this party!!!

Hobie Hyder started a discussion at the May meeting to see if there was enough interest to plan a club railfan trip. We have circulated a questionnaire to get input from the membership and we need your opinion in order to make any serious plans. Please return your questionnaire, or let Hobie or one of the officers know, if you like the idea. There are some very good train rides in the region.

On May 21st a group of MEMRR members helped Gary Rabetoy move his donated HO/Hon3 layout into the Carter Railroad Museum where it will become an exhibit depicting a little bit of the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina (Tweetsie) and perhaps the Southern RR. Another group has taken on the task of creating an oval of G-scale track that will hang from the ceiling of the "Kids' Room" in the museum and are also working on the locomotives we got from Dollywood to see if their very well worn mechanisms can be restored to life so they can operate in that room. The N-scale gang has been working hard on the Bankus layout and they now have successfully run a 50+ car consist with lots of helper engines over the layout! That's real progress! The HO group has the roundhouse about ready to install and the "electricians" will have begun a major rewiring project on that layout by the time you read this.

With all the projects that are now either well underway or about to get started I agree with some of our members that we need another layer of organization. Divisions within the MEMRR that will let every member participate to their desired level of activity in a group that shares their particular interest, talents, and skills. With that in mind I would like to discuss at the June meeting the idea of having coordinators for each of the major areas in the museum. Initially the coordinator could be a volunteer with the position filled by appointment or election when we elect officers in November. Each club member might indicate his/her primary area of interest and participate in that group (this would not exclude any member from participating anywhere in the museum on anything of interest to them, but would have the effect of forming working groups that could concentrate on one project at a time). Possible areas for coordinators might be the following: Club HO layout, Bankus N-scale layout, McKee G-scale layout, Cope HO mobile layout, Rabetoy HO/HOn3 layout; Kids' room, Museum

Display Cases. We now have over 80 members and we have lots of things that need to be done. Let's discuss this as one possible option for getting everyone involved to the level they feel they want to be and provide a way of planning activities on a lot of levels at the same time. What do you think? Let's talk about it at the June meeting and beyond.

Gary Cameron has been a major contributor to our museum's static display cases since the Carter RR Museum opened. He has been periodically removing some of his collection to make room for others to display their railroad treasures and collectables, and to provide the shelf space to allow for sufficient turnover of display items to keep the exhibits fresh and interesting for the public. Gary plans to remove some more items from 1 or 2 shelves in July so this is the first call for any of you who want to use some of that space for the temporary exhibit of some of your items to begin to plan to do so. Please let me know if you want to take advantage of this opportunity so we can coordinate the exchange.

The June MEMRR business meeting has the first part of a two-part program you won't want to miss. Jim Millhorn has long been known locally for his ability to custom paint and decal locomotives, especially Clinchfield Railroad models. He is going to conduct two workshops in June and July that will focus on doing just that and he is providing up to two HO models of rollingstock, and the paint, free of charge for you to practice on (you have to provide your own decals). He has a sign-up sheet with the models and paint colors you can select available at the museum, so sign up and make your choices if you have not already done so. The June workshop will cover all the points you need to know from this master modeler about painting and decaling. The July workshop will be a hands-on in the museum, after the business meeting in our regular spot, so you can try the techniques yourself under Jim's guidance and helpful hand.

This is a terrific model railroad club and we have an outstanding roster of members. I look forward to every opportunity to work with you and learn from each of you in the club and in the museum.

Fred Alsop,
President MEMRR,
Director of the George L. Carter
Railroad Museum.



MEMRR CLUB PICNIC

The June 27th picnic at Tom and Carolyn McKee's is fast approaching. The time our hosts set to begin the festivities is 5:00 p.m. at their house. They are furnishing all the picnic foods, condiments, drinks, and tableware. We are only asked by this generous couple to supply an accurate head count so they can plan accordingly to accommodate us.

This picnic for our members and their spouse (or significant others—but not for families; we need to try to limit this to couples (2 people) if possible so as not to place an undue burden on our hosts and to get commitments from everyone who plans to attend so we can get an accurate head count.

Please reply as soon as possible to john_edwards@memrr.org with the names of those attending so that we can forward information to the McKees.

The following is a survey to see if there is enough interest to plan a club Railfan outing for our club in the not too distant future. No signatures are necessary, it's just an informal survey. Please complete and return by E-mail to john_edwards@memrr.org

GET ON BOARD! FOR THE SECOND MOUNTAIN EMPIRE MODEL RAILROADERS RAILFAN WEEKEND!



AFTER A SUCCESSFUL FIRST MODEL RAILROADER RAILFAN WEEKEND TO CASS, I DECIDED IT WAS LONG OVER DUE TO GO RIDE SOME TRAINS AGAIN. BELOW ARE SOME SUGGESTED TRIPS, HOWEVER I AM OPEN TO ANY AND ALL SUGGESTED TRIPS.

1. **SUGGESTED TRIPS:** (Please pick one or more that you are interested in doing or suggest your own).
- _____ CHATTANOOGA CHOO CHOO/TVRM. MULTIPLE TRIPS ARE AVAILABLE. SUGGESTED TRIPS ARE THE HIWASSEE RIVER RAIL ADVENTURE WITH THE EXTENSION TO COPPER HILL. THE SECOND IS WITH THE BLUE RIDGE RAILROAD TO COMPLETE THE HIWASSEE DIVISION.
- _____ THE GREAT SMOKEY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD
- _____ RETURN TRIP TO CASS. TWO TRAIN TRIPS PLUS ARE AVAILABLE.
- _____ OTHER SUGGESTIONS? PLEASE LIST BELOW:

2. PRICE WILL DECIDE WHAT TRIP WILL BEST FIT OUR RAILFAN TRIP. WHAT IS THE DESIRED AMOUNT YOU ARE WILLING TO SPEND? PACKAGES WILL INCLUDE LODGING AND TRAIN TICKETS ONLY.

_____ \$100 TO \$200

_____ \$200 TO 300

3. BEST MONTH TO PLAN A TRIP: _____

4. HOW MANY PEOPLE FROM YOUR FAMILY WILL BE GOING? _____