

The Passing Track

July 2004

Newsletter of the Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club

PO Box 1362—Medford, OR 97501

Home page is <http://rvmrc.railfan.net/>

August Calendar of Events

All events in the Clubhouse at the Railroad Park unless otherwise noted.

New Layout Construction

Each Saturday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Construction/Cleanup Sessions:

Each Thursday 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Public Run Session

Sundays—August 8 and 22 10:30 AM to 3:00 PM

(Sign up in Clubhouse to reserve operator slots)

Board Meeting:

Wednesday, August 11 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM

General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, August 25

7:30 PM to 9:00 PM

“Decoders/Throttles/DCC”

August 15—First United Methodist Church

Picnic/Potluck 10 AM to 4 PM

(Club operators wanted—call Bruce McGarvey)

July Board Meeting Minutes

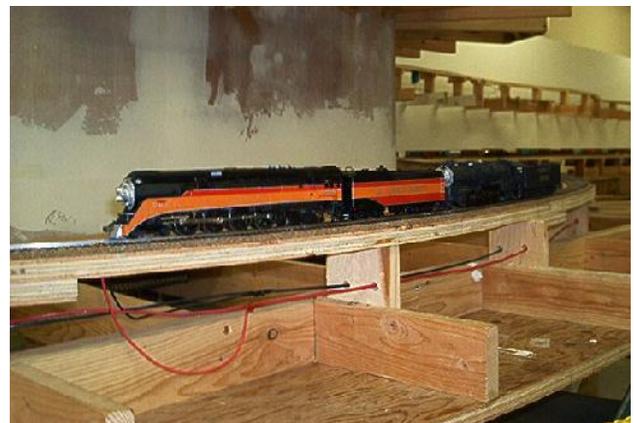
The RVMRC Board met on July 14. The fund raiser to allow members to “buy” their way out of painting work on the Club building has netted \$835 thus far, or almost half the anticipated cost of the contract. The painting contractor will likely start work in August. We still need someone to replace the 18 bird-damaged vent screens before painting begins. Bruce will update membership forms. Jay suggested we take up a Saturday to do a DCC session, because some of the topics, like installation, take more time than is available on a Wednesday (General Membership Meeting) or Thursday evening. While we have a few gremlins to figure out with the DCC system, which may involve replacement of some of the switches, we are getting closer to beginning our scenery work. To prepare ourselves for such work, it was suggested the membership take a Saturday tour around the White City/Medford area of the Eastern Pacific to get modeling ideas. Jim Dugall’s brother-in-law passed away and the Club sends Jim our condolences. Doug Howard is a bit under the weather since his mild stroke, and our thoughts are with Doug. With Dave Hall leaving for the East coast, the club is in need of a webmaster. The club may begin selling Kadee T-shirts, of which a portion of the receipts may be retained by the Club.

A Day at the Park: Snapshot of a Sunday Public Run Session



A snapshot of July 11th's public open house gives one a flavor of what occurs during each of the open houses held twice monthly from April through October. While only three members had signed up for today's sessions, the day began with a half dozen operators, as a number of Club members showed up anyway. And each person brought unique railroad equipment, a reflection of individual interests in road names, era and degrees of authenticity. For the public, this day was a veritable feast

of steam to diesel, freight to passenger. Visitors were already streaming in by 10:30, a half hour before official opening time. There are always kids—their parents, grandparents, babysitter, aunts, uncles, friends—in tow. Ed Scott's two-step platforms are always filled with those kids, and from those platforms, there are great views to be had. Younger kids are often seen on the shoulders of an adult, where views are even better.



When crowds are not as thick, an occasional lucky child gets an invitation to join the conductors and engineers inside the module loop. Kids that spend some time running and switching trains under tutelage of a Club member pass through the lift gate walking on air. While their feet really are on the ground, their spirits are definitely lifted. You can read it on their faces and in their eyes. On this particular day, however, there were no apprentice operators. But there were many kids who were very pleased to have shared some time following the trains. And there was plenty for eyes to feast on. Where else would you see a UP Daylight, Santa Fe's Southwest Chief, a GN 2-6-2, a Santa Fe 4-8-4 which was used over the Raton Pass between New Mexico and Colorado, an Amtrak F40PH leading a freight, and everything from trailer trains and containers to woodside



reefers and vintage boxcars. For some of the older visitors, Dave Spakousky was busy explaining the Club's layout design, present and future. This is an important outreach to help visitors understand the nature of our layout, that there is more than just a bunch of trains running on tracks.



Half the floor sports the first part of the Club's permanent layout, and DCC is king here. The system presents all of

us with challenges, but each run session our knowledge increases. On this particular day, Mark Babbit, visiting the Club from Arizona, showed us some of the versatility of DCC. At one point he held two throttles in his one (very big) hand, and was controlling 4 trains on the upper level and two on the lower level—simultaneously. Jay Mudge, Tom Baldwin, and Mark all have DCC equipment with sound installed, and the clanging bells, steam whistles, and diesel droning could be heard all over the new layout. Moreover, ditch lights were flashing alternately, headlights dimmed when trains were in sidings, and lights were properly turned on and off on multiple units—all controlled by DCC. The realism was awesome. At Crater yard, Mark built a 74 car 3 engine train that traversed the entire lower loop without a hitch, a record for the Club! At the end of it all, he switched out the equipment back to their appropriate tracks—cutting, setting, running around, sometimes splitting the 3 lead units to utilize motive power most efficiently. All this without ever throwing a block toggle (which do not exist on the DCC anyway)! At one point, on both the module and DCC side there were 9 trains running. A wonderful day for rail fanning if there ever was one.

Miscellany...

The Board approved the use of our Club building by the Evening Minicrafters of Medford. This group works mostly at the dollhouse scale of 1:12, 1:24 and 1:48. They will be meeting once a month. It is hoped they can share some of their modeling skills as we venture into scenery.

Each one of us values our time. While we all are happy to answer visitors' questions and give advice on electrical, DCC, and scenery techniques for nonmembers with home layouts, let's remember to consult with fellow members before volunteering them to help put together kits, install DCC, etc. Volunteering does have limits.

Some of those attending NMRA's Division meet in Yreka July 23-25 will use the opportunity to visit the Railroad Park, and our Club layout. Welcome gang!

Eagle Scout Requests Help

Tristan Perkins of Boy Scout Troop 112 is working on his Eagle project in late July and August. The project involves installing skirting on both telegraph shacks at the Park (Eagle and Medford shacks), and painting the interior of the Eagle shack. He is in the process of recruiting help and would be interested to know if anyone from the RVMR Club is interested in helping. Tristan estimates it will take 188 man-hours to complete his

project. A flyer is hanging on the Club bulletin board or contact Tristan at 541-482-1966.

RAILROAD TIME CARDS 2004

Aug 15 – FUMC Harvest Picnic at Railroad Park, RVMRR Club open for church members. Info: thru Bruce at iwcr@charter.net

Aug 15 – Lane Society Model Railroaders 3rd Annual Picnic, 2 PM at clubhouse, Junction City, Ore. RVMRR Club members invited. RSVP Dan Dexter horaileug@juno.com. Also Info: thru Bruce at iwcr@charter.net

Sept 1-4 – 24th Natl. Narrow Gauge Convention, Westin Santa Clara Hotel, Santa Clara, Calif. Info: www.narrowgauge2004.com

Sept 3-6 – SOLS Labor Day Meet, Medford Railroad Park, Saturday evening potluck dinner. More info to follow.

Sept 4-6 – Great Eastern Oregon Train Festival, Grant Cty Fair Grounds, John Day, Ore. Info: Patrick Bentz 541-575-4247 or trainbarn@oregontrail.net, <http://canyonmtn-gineers.tzo.org/>

Sept 11-12 – Albany Train Show, Linn Cty Fairgrounds, Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4. Info: Don Albright, 541-928-1612, dwalbright@proaxis.com.

Sept 18 – West Side Train Show & Swap Meet, Forest Grove, Natl. Guard Armory. Info: Ken Jackson 503-357-8753 or jacksonkj@comcast.net

Sept 25 – Tentative date for PNR Mini-Meet, Roseburg Public Library. Stay tuned. More info to follow.

Nov 27-28 – Rogue Valley Railroad Show & Swap Meet, Medford Armory, Medford, Ore. Sat 10-5, Sun 11-4. Info: Brad Fawcett 541-535-7952, bfawcett@mind.net or <http://rvmrc.railfan.net/>

Listings include events within a day's drive from the Rogue Valley. If you know of shows not listed here, or sometime in the future, please let me know so we can share that with our readers. Contact Bruce at iwcr@charter.net or 541-779-8145. 07/25/2004bhm.

25 years ago this month - The Passing Track July 1979:

"Forth of July ... (RVMRR) members in Ashland for combined display with Historical Society and the Live Steamers in Lithia Park. An oval of track was set up in the park....and two locomotives were kept busy all day giving rides to the kiddies...It was quite a show... we are fortunate to have such an accomplished and energetic group of railroaders in the valley. Our little old valley is a good place to be if you are a railhobbyist...."

Ed note: Let's hope we don't forget it also.

"Next meeting (July 24) at George Rambo's Hobby Tree. New slate of officers: Mike Yoakum, Pres., Stan McCollough, VP, Dave Spakousky, Sect., Milo Lacy, Treas."

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