



The Passing Track

July 2008

Newsletter of the Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club

PO Box 1362—Medford, OR 97501

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

Where There Are Trees, There is a Forest! July Membership Meeting to Clinic Building Trees

It is estimated, the Club needs in the neighborhood of 10,000 trees. Luckily, we don't need them all at once. The next membership meeting (Wednesday, July 23) will be dedicated to a clinic for building trees (beginning with oak/deciduous trees). E. Don Petit and Dave Spakousky will prepare a large quantity of trees in each of the five phases it takes to create them. As the photo illustrates, even less than a full forest will add super realism to a scene.



July Board Meeting Notes

The Club Board met on July 9, 2008. Three Club officers and seven members were present. John Gerritsma subbed for the Secretary, who was on vacation. The club's finances continue to be in good standing, with significant recent income to the Club related to annual dues being collected. There are a total of 50 members on the club roster, with five members being in arrears with their dues which were due in June.

Bruce McGarvey reported a few places on the roof were missing shingles (presumably as a result of this year's wind events). He also observed patches of roof area with no felt asphalt present (presumably deliberately done during the last "low bid" roofing job). These concerns led the Club board to request Larry Tuttle getting evaluations/cost estimates to repair or replace the roof. It was suggested we also look into a metal roof, instead of replacing the current asphalt shingle one. Per E. Don, Larry had remarked the roof has a life of 1-2 years, but some repairs are needed now.

Several people have remarked their newsletters are being chewed up in the mail (presumably by the sorting/franking machines). John will experiment with a different fold in the newsletter. If that does not work, then the Club will have to use envelopes.

The technical issue of overloading the DCC circuits has been further investigated. Dave Spakousky and Ed Kleinman believe having the accessories (like switch machine circuits and power outlets used for tools) on the same circuit as the PM140's that control the DCC signals to our engines result in an overload. This occurs when the accessories come on before or independent of the PM140's and the circuits go crazy trying to find addresses to complete their circuits, thus filling up the memory/system with useless signals. Larry Tuttle and Dave prepared the circuits for separation and will proceed with conduit to make the new circuit functional. Wall outlets dedicated to accessories only will be color coded, but likely on located near the back wall (behind Butte Falls).

E. Don has inspected ¾ of the club cars on the layout, but was sidelined with preparing Derby for a photo shoot (which was subsequently cancelled (see photo on cover page).

The Club has been invited to a fund-raising show for Klamath Rails on November 1 and 2. Bud Tippet has offered \$25 for the N-scale layout donated to the Club that is being stored in his garage. The Board accepted the offer. Jay was authorized to obtain 18 used (or if not available) 12 new tortoise switch machines.

Dave Carr appointed Dave Spakousky and Jay Mudge as a trailer committee to determine our needs and cost estimates. The roof, however, takes priority.

Operations

The Club brainstormed about operations issues in two special meetings in June. The following table illustrates the results of that brainstorming session.

The concept of our Sunday run sessions also being a "show" was introduced. This context provided the brainstormers with a different perspective on both problems and solutions. Therefore, **the term "show" is now defined to mean any public presentation of either our permanent or modular railroads.**

The objectives of **The Show** are:

- Entertain the public. Utilize/provide switching operations during show.
- Educate the public about our themes, "history", points of interest, railroad operations, and model railroading.
- HAVE FUN!
- Encourage membership.
- Theme the shows. Plan and advertise. Develop plan around the theme and build a storyline. Start with the basics—Medford to Kfalls.
- Strive for zero technical issues (see list below for solutions).
- All equipment tested and setup before Show begins.

Brainstorm Results

Problems	Solutions
<i>Rolling Stock</i>	<i>Rolling Stock</i>
Wheels out of gauge, incorrect weight, trucks bind, coupler height too low or too high, non-kadee couplers that do not perform, low glad hands, non-metal wheelsets, warped axles, and non inspected cars on the layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No uninspected rolling stock on layout (no exceptions after a phase-in period to August 10). ➤ Setup and test trains before Sunday run. ➤ Make and designate space for setup of member equipment for show. ➤ Check sound levels on DCC sound; set standards and adjust sound systems to reflect standards.
<i>Locomotives</i>	<i>Locomotives</i>
Dirty wheels; wheels out of gauge; couplers too high, too low or off center; trucks askew; shorts on curves; temporary stops (DCC compatibility/quality); body and/or parts obstruct movement;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No uninspected rolling stock on layout (no exceptions after a phase-in period to August 10). ➤ Setup and test trains before Sunday run.
<i>DCC</i>	<i>DCC</i>
DCC gremlins, overloaded power districts, locos not consisted properly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clinics for operations. ➤ Run with a single sound unit; if consisted with multiple sound units, turn others off (until technical issues with overloads can be solved).
<i>People/Operators</i>	<i>People/Operators</i>
Lack of training on DCC, knowledge of operations, and track (switch) locations; poor communications; inattention; trains left on mainline; trying to set up trains during the show; meeting varied needs of members; lack of people signed up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tell story to the public—use your imagination. ➤ Clinics for operations. ➤ Clinics for DCC operations. ➤ Create/use published rulebook. ➤ Create/use timetable. ➤ Provide operator job descriptions. ➤ Use headsets and set up speaker for public to listen into “RR” conversation.
<i>Publics</i>	<i>Publics</i>
Lack of access to layout; misses “toy” trains; security (theft); lack of action to view; lack of animation; getting bored and leaving quickly; seeing trains stopped; food and drink; lack of a “show”; not enough docents (to mingle/educate public); no educational experience on behalf of members to explain theme/ops to public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop themed Show (see above)
<i>Model Railroad (Perm Layout)</i>	<i>Model Railroad (Perm Layout)</i>
Stuck in toy train mode; key geographic locations not marked so no reference points for public and operators; switches left open; overloaded power districts; no story or context; security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop themed Show (see above) ➤ Clinics for operations

August 2008 Calendar of Events

Public Run Session

2nd and 4th Sunday of Each Month
10:30 AM to 3:30 PM

**General Construction/New Layout
Saturdays**

Generally From 9:00 AM to 4 PM

Board Meeting

2nd Wednesday of Each Month
7:30 PM to 9:00 PM

General Membership Meeting

4th Wednesday of each month
7:30 PM to 9:00

RAILROAD TIME CARDS 2008

July 13-19 – “Anaheim Special”, NMRA National Convention, Anaheim, Calif. Info: www.nmra.org/2008/

July 19-20 – Redding Central Model Railroad Club Open House, 2354 Railroad Ave, Redding Calif. Time 11 am – 5 pm. Info: 530-243-1360

Oct 11-12 – Central Oregon Live Steamers & Eastern Cascades Model Railroad Club Open House, 21520 Modoc Lane, Bend, Ore. Info: 541-317-1545.

Nov 29-30 – 31st **Rogue Valley Railroad Show**, Medford Armory, Medford, Ore. Model railroad displays, exhibits, swap met, door prizes, raffle and more. Info: Bill 541-821-5547 or Brad 541-535-7952
bfawcett@mind.net

If you know of shows not listed here please let me know so we can share that information with our readers.
Contact Bruce at iwcurr@charter.net or 541-890-8145. 07/15/2008

The Warning Signs: You might be a Model Railroader if...

- You've ever bought a freight car you had no use for, just because it looked so nice, and then bought more just like it, so it wouldn't look out of place.
- You've ever traced the route of a wire under your layout by pulling on it.

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