

The Passing Track

May 2010

Newsletter of the Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club

PO Box 1362—Medford, OR 97501

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

Z Scale Convention To Visit RVMRC

Micro-Train Lines is sponsoring a National Z-Scale Convention on April 30 to May 1, and convention goers will be visiting the RR Park on that Friday starting at about 4 PM. The bus will drop off the first group of 50 or so between 4:00 and 4:15 on Friday afternoon, and the second group of about 50 will arrive around 4:45. The RVMRC will be open starting at 4 PM running trains and showing off our signal system. Heck, we might even spin a wild tale or two. There will be a BBQ at the Park catered by Tark's Market. The activity is planned to wrap up between 7:00 and 7:30pm.

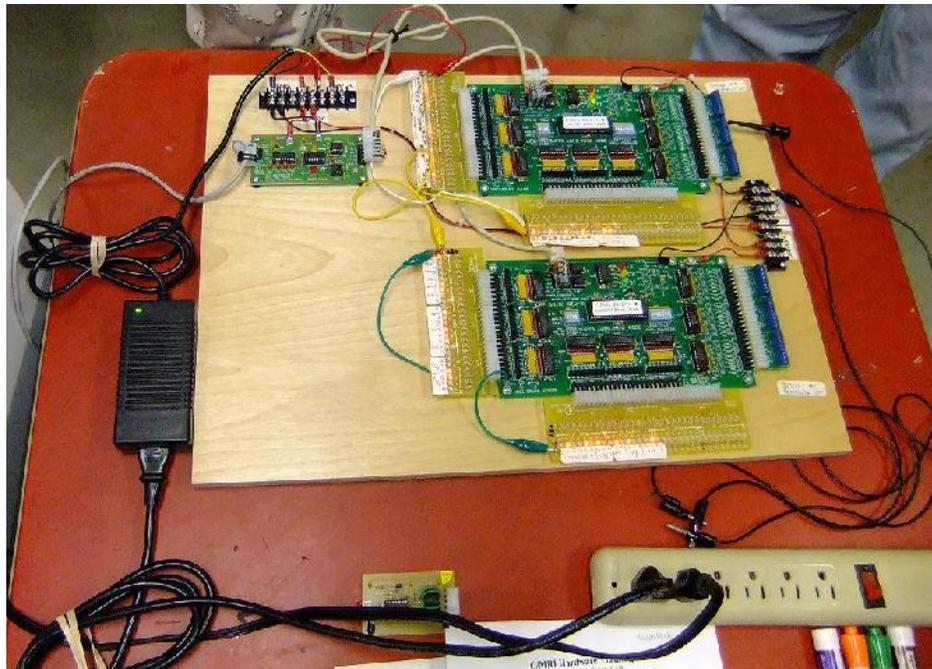
Micro-Train Lines of Talent, OR, has been a generous contributor to the RR Park and the annual RR Show in the past. Let's put on a great exhibit for this event. Please let Brad Fawcett know if you plan to help run trains at the club (541-535-7952 or bfawcett@hughes.net).

Signals 101

By all accounts, February's Signals 101 went very well. Several club members were in attendance along with five folks from the Lane Society of Model Engineers. The program started off with Larry Tuttle's presentation of signals on the Siskiyou and the Pacific & Eastern...with a dabble into CTC, which the Eugene people are interested in. Next up was Ed Kleinman, who put on a virtuoso performance on how to put together the hardware for a C/MRI (Computer/Model Railroad Interface) Signal System. Midway through Ed's (really big) show, we broke for lunch. Reconvening after lunch, Ed distributed some handy handouts for wiring signals and how to identify each and every wire under the layout. More signal system speak followed and, finally, Dave Spakousky led a tour and demonstration of the P&E's signal system, complete with detailed explanations of various nuances.



Dave Dexter, Tim, John Risbrough, Ed, Ron and Brad discuss some fine points of C/MRI and related hardware



The pair of SMINI board which Ed has put together in order to test his software and coding. Half the signals on the P&E can be replicated on these two boards



*Brad, Mike, John Loper, John Risbrough and Dave discuss details of the "Keno Node" and computer display.
(My goodness, doesn't that backdrop look fine!)*

PNR Mini-Meet Also Features RVMRC Signal System

The PNR Mini-meet was held in Roseburg April 17. Attendance was between 35 and 40 modelers. Interestingly enough, when the "under 50s" were asked to stand; only about 3 or 4 persons stood... an "old man's hobby???" Yikes! The "youngens" from the RVMRC in attendance were Jim Dougall, Tim Jamin, Jay Mudge, Art McKee, Dave Spakousky, and Bruce McGarvey.

A number of interesting clinics were given including airbrushing basics, an occupancy detector project, weathering a 1/4" scale model, and the signaling clinic by Dave and Jay. The signaling clinic by Dave and Jay was well received with a lot of good questions and interest. They may have to do a road show for some of our northern clubs. They did a great job and was a credit to them as well as RVMRR Club.

In addition, models were judged for the popular model contest. An excellent N-scale diorama of a portion of the Hull Oaks Sawmill at Dawson, Oregon, was presented by Ken Olsen and was judged for the NMRA Achievement Program for Prototypical Models. A photo is included with this email and more can be found at his web site <http://www.dawson-station.blogspot.com/>.

There were a couple of home layouts open for visits. A stop at the local hobby shop was a must do with many thanks to Lachlan and Paula MacKinnon of Mac's Tracks Model Railroadinga real model railroading hobby shop.

The Fall Mini-Meet will be hosted by the Corvallis Society of Model Engineers.



Dave and Jay Signaling. Note TV monitor showing the end view of their display.

Sunday Run Etiquette, OR

How to Have Fun and Give the Public an Experience

by Dave Spakousky

Several areas of concern were visible last Sunday. I believe some corrections in these areas will make viewing by the public more enjoyable.

1. It is imperative that we prepare our trains on Saturday making sure they run properly, track properly and make needed adjustments. Most Saturdays E. Don Pettit is available to assist in making these adjustments. Once your train is ready stage train where it does not block the main line so other engineers can prepare their trains.
2. Any cars that create a problem, more than once, need to be removed from train, moved to E Don's repair area along with the car card if applicable. Constantly stopping trains, to fix problems, backs up the complete layout. Trains that are not moving will turn off the public and can create busy hands.
3. This last Sunday several switches on the Klamath peninsula were opened by the public. Club members should make themselves visible on the aisle side and keeping an eye for busy hands. Showing interest in the public will help keep hands off the layout. (Do we need to look at a Plexiglas front? I would hope we do not need to).
4. Sunday I observed several groups huddled around trains that were having troubles or trying to assemble a consist while the public was left on their own. Should step 1 be followed we would have time to share with the public while we run our train. The public is amazed that we can converse with them while the train is traversing the layout. I enjoy showing the public how the system works and encourage them to ask questions.

5. When running on Sunday we should learn to “not follow the train”. We end up pushing past the public and members to get to other areas of the layout while ignoring the public. I encourage all members to learn the layout so they know where their train is headed. The bridges in the aisle were design to allow passage as needed to reach service areas or attend to problems or needed adjustments. Sunday the bridges were busier than turnstiles at some local stores.

6. We must practice to make sure we close or align switches behind us. Sunday we had several reared that created some headaches. After the run was over I plowed into engines on the Crater Yard engine track as the lead to the siding and the lead to the engine track were left open. It is partly my fault as I should have checked all the switches as all are in yard limits. (*Each one of us can recount an incident where we have left open a switch. I know I can--ed.*)

7. Our goal on Sundays is to show off the layout, its potential and what the club has to offer potential members. We can only do this if we have a smoothly running layout and by following the above listed steps.

April Board Meeting Summary

The Rogue Valley Model Railroad Club board of directors met on Wednesday, April 14, 2010. There were three board and eleven club members present. The club's finances are in good standing and will be buoyed real soon by the income from dues which expire and are renewed in June. The board approved the purchase of a new quality 8-foot ladder to replace our aging unit. Two new members were approved. They are Blair Moody and Richard Wright Sr. Both have been members in the past and received their old numbers.

Fire extinguishers are due for servicing. The DCC group reports the need to investigate the replacement of the PS-1 circuit breaker due to continuing issues with locos going dead in the BN and SP yard area. The issue is the old PS-1 unit cannot handle more than a few locos in its block with QSI sound. The PSX-3 series circuit breaker is a possible replacement and could handle as many as 16 locos equipped with QSI sound units.

An informal park discussion occurred earlier in the month in which a proposal was made to extend the hours of the park to 8 hours to alleviate the parking issue by spreading visitors over a longer period. The topic raised some interesting points as board meeting attendees weighed in. It was suggested that the Park Committee officially take up the issue of parking and the management, which seems to have fallen mostly on RVMRC members.

June 2010 Calendar of Events

General Construction/New Layout Saturdays

Generally From 10:00 AM to 4 PM

Board Meeting

2nd Wednesday of each month

June 9

7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

Operations Session**

2nd Saturday of each month

June 12

10 am to 3 pm

General Membership Meeting

4th Wednesday of each month

7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

June 23

**Please sign up for engineer and conductor assignments upon arrival. By coming before the session starts, you have time to setup/acquire throttles, radios, and motive equipment, if needed, as well as become familiar with the assignment. Operations session begins promptly at 10:30.

RAILROAD TIME CARDS 2010

Apr 30-May 1 - First annual National Z Scale Convention, ☐☐ Ramada Medford Convention Center, Medford, Ore. Variety of events including tour of Micro-Trains plant, private trip to Medford's Railroad Park (Friday), public show day (Saturday, clinics, and more. Info: www.national-zscaleconvention.com, or Sara at 541-535-1755 x250.

May 1-2 - Rickreall Grange Train Swap Meet & Show, 280 Main St."HWY 99W", Rickreall, Ore. 10am-4pm. Info: Pry626@juno.com or 503-606-0398.

Jul 11-18 – 75th Anniversary NMRA National Train Show, Milwaukee, Wis. <http://www.nmra75.org>

Jul 24-25, Jul 31-Aug 1 – 40th Anniversary Great Oregon Steam-Up, 3995 Brooklake Road NE, Brooks, Ore. Gates open at 7am, close at 6pm. Info: www.antiqpowerland.com, 503-393-2424.

Oct 23-24 - 3rd Annual Model Railroad Show & Sales Event, Klamath Rails Model RR Club, Klamath County Fairgrounds, Klamath Falls, Ore. Info: Steve Hart 541-892-2550, Joe Brick 541-883-3071

Sep 30-Oct 2 - 2010 Annual SPH&TS Conference, Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento, Calif. Info: <http://www.sphts.org/>

Nov -- ESPEE-N-OREGON 2010 will be held in Salem, Ore. Check web site in the future for dates and location, <http://espee-n-oregon.com/convention.html>

Nov 27-28 - 33rd Annual Rogue Valley Railroad Show, Medford Armory, Medford, Ore. Info: Brad at 541-535-7952, Bruce 541-890-8145 or jwcr@charter.net

Train Trivia: "During his successful 1992 presidential campaign, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton traveled by rail from New York to Philadelphia on an Amtrak Metroliner. Every other time Clinton used ground transportation during his campaign, he travel by bus." 04/16/2010 bhm