

# The SCOOP

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The newsletter for the Knoxville Area Model Railroad Club, Inc.  
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## Conductor's Comments - Larry Burkholder, President

I hope everyone had a very nice Christmas and New Year and that Santa brought you a lot of cool train stuff. We look forward to seeing it at our next meeting, which is Sunday the 7th. Our next museum open house is Sunday the 21st. There will be a short business meeting on the 7th starting at 5 pm.

We're into 2007, so now there is no excuse for not paying your 2007 dues; **still only \$25**. See Bob Strickland at the next meeting or mail him your check. All checks are payable to "KAMR".

As I look back on 2006 I see a mixed year. We had a drop in membership, but added several quality new members. Membership activity remained about the same, with a 45 - 50% average turnout at Sunday sessions and business meetings. I think that is pretty good but, since it is the same individuals showing up all the time, there is something we're not doing to attract the other 50% of our membership. Those of you who have not been coming or have not been for a while should give it another try. Things are constantly changing in the club and you should be able to find a niche of interest. If any of you have issues with club operations please contact me and let me know your concerns.

We supported museum activities well and continue to get high praise for our efforts. As a museum board member I can assure you that the museum counts KAMR as one of its biggest blessings. The demand for our summer camp program is the highest of any of the museum's programs. Our T-Trak program has gotten national recognition in the N-Track newsletter and most recently in N Scale Collector magazine. At the end of the year, largely thru the efforts of Mark Furhman and assistance from Oscar Lindstrom and Pete Hoke, we offered the citizens of the area a Christmas train garden with thousands of lights and special trains running every Saturday and Sunday evening until Christmas. The Oak Ridger newspaper covered it with an almost full page spread of text and colored pictures and for the last few weekends attendance averaged around 200 people per night. It will be hard to top it this next Christmas, but I suspect we have created something the public will expect and look forward to seeing each year in the future.

I am sure the various Divisional Coordinators will comment on their group's activities, but I want to commend the HO Division for their nerve to start and strong effort to finish a major revamping of their layout exhibit in 2006. A dedicated group of members have moved quickly to get the work back to a point

where trains can be run. There is still a lot of work to be done and I am sure everyone could find some area of work interest if they joined the fun. Contact Clif Johnson or Alec Cameron to find out the work schedule and how you can help.

We re-introduced clinics in 2006, with three being conducted - "Yard Design for Operations", "Making and Coloring Rocks", and "Weathering Rolling Stock and Structures". We will continue this on a quarterly basis if the club interest is there.

We're all getting older and several of our members, or spouses, had serious illnesses in 2006. We were encouraged to see them back at our club functions and wish them all a healthy 2007.

In 2007 I hope we can continue the forward looking activities that were started in 2006. We should have a revamped more attractive web page design this year and I hope everyone will utilize this medium to expand club information and generate a lively dialog on model railroading topics for those inside and outside our club who visit the page. I know we will continue to support all the museum events when requested. New membership comes mostly thru outside club exposure, so the target of all members in 2007, but especially Division Coordinators, should be to find ways to keep members interested and get more of them involved in club activities. I would also like to see us share some activities with other clubs in the area, specifically the Crossville and Johnson City clubs, maybe Chattanooga. Cross fertilization can only increase the knowledge and fun of our club. Finally, I hope in 2007 we can actually set in motion a resolution to the Large Scale Division's space dilemma. The museum basement is still under the most serious consideration, but consideration is also being given towards building a new addition to house both the large scale trains and the fire fighting exhibits. Although it is ultimately the museum's decision, we can significantly drive this if we show sufficient interest. On to a bigger and better year!

### **HO Division - Alex Cameron**

We made it though all our major events in December with great success. Many thanks to all the members who have come and have worked on the layout.

Everyone's help is much appreciated even if you only could come infrequently. Special thanks to Clif for his HO division e-mails about work sessions and other matters. For those who haven't been in a while, come and see what has been happening!

For January, I propose to return to our twice a week work schedule, along with our regular Sunday meeting. We will work each Thursday, and on the even Saturdays. If I am reading the calendar correctly, this will mean: Regular Sundays: Jan 7 & 21. Thursdays: Jan 4,11,18,25. Saturdays: Jan 13,27. Watch for e-mails from Clif.

Again, we have had a productive month, with the fairly steady crew of 5 or 6 at most work sessions. A lot has been done. The main line has been completed, and over the course of the various events, quite a few trains have been run over it. A number of problems areas have been addressed and correctly. We have been trying to be fairly aggressive about identifying and fixing any problems that we see. The upper (mine) loop is still operating with a shoofly and has had a reverser installed in a temporary location. The east end of the yard has had controllers installed for the switches there, and we can now use the arrival/departure tracks there.

Although we can run on the main line, and again have the possibility of having an operating session on the third Sunday, no decision has been made about that. However, the third Sunday is a run day, and if you have Christmas presents (or non-Christmas presents for that matter) that is the time to bring them to run.

### **N-Scale Activities - Bruce McElhoe**, N Coordinator - [hmcELHOE@aol.com](mailto:hmcELHOE@aol.com)

The voting and the railroading have taken place and you guys seem to want to put up with me for another year. I'm looking forward to another banner year in n-scale. Many of our major projects are approaching the final stages of completeness. Side discussions are starting to be about operating sessions rather than work projects. There are train shows starting to show up on the calendar that can be handled as day trips. And we have the opportunity to show off our new Christmas goodies!☺

The first step toward operations should be to finish the installation of the last new siding to the icing station. The next step is to modify the track power that adds an electrical gap on all mainlines at the John Deere Dealership module end of the geezer gate. This will give us four distinct electrical districts for operations that will be especially useful under DC control. The four divisions would be the yard modules, the peninsula, west block, and the east block. The peninsula is from the 'T' module to the reversing loop. The west block extends from the Budweiser Brewery module around to the John Deere Dealership. The east block is from the pig yard module around to the geezer gate.

Our next step is toward DCC operations. The above electrical modifications will also be a benefit using this type of engine control system. We will be exploring dual control systems this year in order to offer greater versatility and variety of motive power.

I will close for now by encouraging all of us to continue utilizing our web site at [www.knoxmodelrailroaders.com](http://www.knoxmodelrailroaders.com). Sharing anything about trains (and food) is good!

### **Large Scale Rails - Jim Schall**

The large scale group has had a new member join, Ken Parson, a recent emigrant from Indiana. He has been model railroading for quite some time and

is in the throes of constructing the French Broad and Rocky Bottom Railway which will be modeled after south and east of the Asheville, NC area. I believe it is an early diesel/steam transition era road. He should fit right in with our eclectic bunch!! We have also had several visitors at our Wednesday sessions that seem to be inclined to join if we don't scare them off (or the lack of S scale products)!!!

I apparently have become infamous; there is an article in the S Gaugian, about a MOW ditcher car that I built for a guy in California. He was so pleased with it that he sent to the publisher the notes that I sent him to explain the construction and techniques I used on his car. (The project started out with a perfectly beautiful brass S scale rail ditcher and I kit"bashed" it!! I sent him several "are you sure you want me to do this?" emails before I had the nerve to start. I guess I won that round after all.

### **Activities Calendar**

In an effort to get more of us to use our web site the calendar has been moved to [knoxmodelrailroaders.com](http://knoxmodelrailroaders.com). This should get more of us to the site and hopefully to participate in the exchange of ideas and info that is found there.