

# The SCOOP

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The newsletter for the Knoxville Area Model Railroad Club, Inc.  
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## **Volunteers for Christmas in the Garden – Four weeks and counting!**

It is already that time of year, and we need members to assist in setting up and operating the Garden Layout this Christmas season. We will be installing the lighting and checking out the layout between 1:00 and 4:00 PM on November the 22nd the Sunday prior to Thanksgiving. Prior to set up, we need to check out the strings of Christmas lights and install lights in all of the building. At least two volunteers will be needed each day starting Friday, December the 4th during the CMOR Gala and each Saturday and Sunday from 4:30 through 8:30 PM throughout December.

There is a sign-up sheet next to the coffee stand. Sign up fast as the slots go fast. If you have any questions, send Ken an email at [kklipple421@cs.com](mailto:kklipple421@cs.com).

## **Conductor's Comments - Larry Burkholder, President**

Our regular November meetings will be from 1 to 4 pm on Sunday the 1st and Sunday the 15th. We will have a short business meeting on the 1st starting at 4:15 pm. The 15th is our regular museum open house.

The museum's fund raising gala will be held on Friday, December 4th starting at 6 pm. We will be expected to run all our trains from then until about 7:30. We also need volunteers to work the bar starting at 6 pm and serve wine during the meal from about 7 until 8 pm. Everyone is asked to wear their club shirts.

This is a big-deal event, so we want to present our best image, which also includes having the club rooms clean and neat. Another need is to help set up the lighting for the Christmas Garden. Mark Fuhrman has agreed to have his crew help with the main lighting again this year, but we will need to have additional lighting for the buildings and other areas set up by us. Ken Klipple is coordinating that part of it and will be calling for a work detail sometime before, or just after, Thanksgiving.

As we have done the past few years, we will operate the Christmas Garden every Saturday and Sunday evening thru December. We need at least two, and preferably three, people per night to man the area. Some nights there a few visitors and on others there can be a hundred or more. The crowds seem to grow as the month progresses. We will have a sign-up sheet posted on the club bulletin board starting Sunday the 1st. In past years the same handful of regulars has volunteered, with many having to do double duty to cover all the nights. It's time for a few more of you to step up and help pay your share of the rent. Please pick a date or two.

After a number of years of service, Don Loy has stepped down as our Librarian and Bob Strickland has agreed to take over the responsibilities. We want to thank Don for setting the system up and keeping things in order. We run a pretty loose system, but we have added many new items, especially tapes and DVD's, I know Bob will want to keep things straight, so let's give Bob our cooperation and follow the rules when we check something out. I'm sure Bob will post how he wants us to do it soon.

On Sunday, December 6th, we will hold our club Christmas party in Gallery II of the museum starting at 6 pm. Dick Brion has informed me that the board has contacted potential officers and new board members and will have a slate ready for our votes. The club provides the meat and drinks are usually provided by a generous member or two, but sides and desserts are brought by attendees. You will soon be given a list of food options to bring. Of course, for you new members, wives, girlfriends, or significant others are invited. Hope to see a big turnout.

### **HO Division – Alex Cameron**

Here are the dates for November, 2009. The next regular club Sunday meeting will be on the first Sunday, November 1. The third Sunday, November 15, will be an operating session, starting about 1:30. Saturday work sessions will be on November 7 and November 21, starting about 9:30. Thursday work sessions will be on November 5, 12, and 19, starting at 9:30. The fourth Thursday, November 26, is Thanksgiving, and there will be no work session that day. We have a fifth Sunday in November, the 29, and that will be a work Sunday.

The attendance on Thursdays has been about average. Saturdays has been only 2 or 3 hardcore attendees. We had good attendance for the October operating session, with two crews for most of the trains, and we ran all of the trains. The last several months the operating sessions have been going quite well. It must be about time to complicate things again by putting a scheduled passenger train into the mix. I have been working on the passenger train operation and we will add at least one passenger train for the November session.

Work continues on the mountain in the corner, and the engine terminal.

We had two cases of what I call 'phantom' shorts; one in Lumberton, and the second in the Raccoon Creeks modules. I think that we have fixed the one in Lumberton. We found that two of the power districts were interconnected, and have fixed that and removed and simplified wiring in the process. The Raccoon Creeks one is still being worked on.

Several people have been looking at passenger and freight cars and checking couplers height and coupler operation.

We continue to work on operating problems as we encounter them. We actually had a Tortoise switch machine fail. It had been drilled into inadvertently, and

that may have had something to do with it. We have noticed that the overall operating reliability of the layout has increased, so our work on fixing problems is paying off.

Curt and I are still operating on Tuesday AM. Remember to bring locomotives and controllers for the operating session.

### **N/Z-Scale Activities - Bruce McElhoe**

Each time we gather, our DCC discussions seem to develop into better potential track modifications. The goal is toward a two track main thus stepping away from the current N-Trak design. Potential track designs are floating around for some initial review and comments. We will plan on continuing these discussions at upcoming gatherings. My latest thoughts are to have an arrival/departure yard, an interchange yard, and a remote interchange track that interlaces two independent mainline systems. Food for thought!

We continue running in the DCC mode at all of our recent gatherings. Some of us have taken advantage to Hobby Town's 30% discount offer for any Digitrax products. I know that I have four decoders on the list to convert an ABBA set of Intermountain F7's. With others doing the same we will have (for us n-scalers) a large fleet of decoder equipped motive power available.

The peninsula DCC compatibility still has issues coming off the #2 main. The #2 wye tracks are dead but easily fixed with moving some electrical jumpers between terminal blocks under the module. Otherwise, the auto reversing section is working perfectly once in the peninsula area regardless of which track you are using.

In our last Scoop I reported that Greg Wroblicky's new UT-4R throttle was DOA and would only work when plugged in. He was able to return the unit for a swap and the replacement is operating correctly. On the subject of throttles, I recently had some communication problems but determined that the battery was low. I learned this while trouble shooting the auto reversing section on the peninsula. It kept losing contact and I would be required to plug in and re-acquire the engine. Swapped batteries using some we've had at the museum but still had the issue. I found that these had been drained over time and so were removed from service. A new pack of 9V's solved my throttle problems. This is old news to those experienced with the world of DCC but it is fresh stuff to remember on the n-scale side.

### **Z-Scale:**

Stay tuned. The Z report will be added upon receipt.

### **Large Scale Rails - Brad Tutt**

Brian, Ken and Lance have been very busy getting Squeekville getting it ready for its first public display at Hobbytown USA on the first weekend in December. They have rebuilt this classic 1935 layout that was started by Brian's Father. Do not miss the opportunity to see it with your grandchildren.

The multi-gauge test track project is taking shape and we hope to have operational by the end of November. This test will include G through N with AC, DC and DCC connection options once finished.

We have lots of preparation for the garden Christmas operations and if you can help contact Ken or Mark. Lots of track work has been done but we will need help with buildings and lights. With luck, we will have better foot lighting and less extension cords this season's run starting December 4<sup>th</sup>. Sign-up sheet for weekend operations will be next to the coffee pot in the club area.

We are planning a work session at John B's home on a Saturday in November if the rain stops to do track work and other items. Keep watching the club calendar website for other events summing soon. Several field trips to member layouts are in the works so stay in touch and enjoy your club.

The S Scalpers participated in an S Gathering in Johnson City which included clinics, "show and tell" and a visit to the train layout at ETSU.

**The KAMR was mentioned in the "society" pages of the News Sentinel on Sunday, October 25.**

Several of the large scale guys visited the L&N Depot and set up a display for the Knoxville Heritage Society benefit of classic toy trains, a few L&N model passenger cars and Mark Fuhrman's G scale lumber mill display and his velocipede (a three wheel rail rider used at the turn of the last century.)

We enjoyed the visiting the folks at Knoxville Heritage benefit and the food was good and the wine free!! (ed.)

**KAMRI Web Site – Bruce McElhoe, Web Site Moderator**

We're into November and approaching our annual elections. I'm sure that our web site can handle a few campaign promises being posted. Or, how about starting an effort to railroad someone into office. ☺

As always please remember that our web site forum is to communicate ideas, share information, sell, buy, trade, and any other events train related.

Don't forget! Our web site address is: [www.knoxmodelrailroaders.com](http://www.knoxmodelrailroaders.com).