

The SCOOP

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The newsletter for the Knoxville Area Model Railroad Club, Inc.
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We need at least two, and preferably three, people to man the garden each Saturday and Sunday evening through December. If you haven't signed up to help one or more evenings please do so ASAP. Contact Ken Klipple or Jim Schall or sign up on the sheet at the club.

Conductor's Comments - Larry Burkholder, President

As we move thru the holiday season we can reflect back on a pretty good year. As of now our membership is eight greater than this time last year, with growth in every division. On the down side, members Doc Arms and Lew Hedrick passed away and we are continuing to pray for Chris Zorn's daughter as she tries to recover from her near drowning. I hope the coming holidays and New Year bring joy and blessings to all of you.

There will be no regular 1st Sunday meeting on the December 6th, as that is the night of our Christmas party. We will meet at 6 pm in Gallery II of the museum.

I hope we have a great turnout. 2010 officers will be announced by the Board and the membership will elect new Board members.

Our regular open house Sunday will be the 20th from 1 to 4 pm.

Ken Klipple, Mark Furhman, and others have been working to get the garden ready for Christmas. We will begin running trains there for the museum gala on the 4th from 6 to 7:30 pm. We will then operate every Saturday and Sunday evening in December from 5 until 8 pm. We need at least two, and preferably three, people to man the garden each night. If you haven't signed up to help one or more nights please do so ASAP. Contact Ken Klipple or me or sign up on the sheet at the club.

As mentioned above, the museum gala is Friday, December 4th starting at 6 pm. We are expected to have all train areas operating until about 7:30 pm. A number of you have volunteered to help man the bar and serve wine at the dinner. Everyone should wear a club shirt. Those serving should wear dressier trousers, no blue jeans and/or sneakers. Everyone should plan on arriving around 5:30 to get things organized. Everyone there will be treated to dinner.

HO Division - Alex Cameron

CMOR Gala on December 4!!! Come and run trains and tend bar!

Here are the dates for December, 2009. Regular club Sunday meeting is on the first Sunday, December 6, which for this month is the Club Christmas party. The third Sunday, December 20, will be an operating session, starting about 1:30. Saturday work sessions will be on December 12 and December 26, starting about 9:30. Thursday work sessions will be on December 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 starting at 9:30. Note that we have work sessions right around Christmas, the 24 and the 26, and another on the 31. I expect that I will be there, since it is close. If anyone else plans to attend, please let me know. Otherwise, I might just play.

The attendance on Thursdays has been about average. Saturdays has been only 2 or 3 hardcore attendees.

We had good attendance again for the November operating session, with two crews for most of the trains, and we ran all of the trains. This seems to be becoming routine now. That is a good sign. We even ran the passenger train schedule, which involves four passenger trains.

Work continues on the mountain in the corner, and the engine terminal. I hope that we can get some more narrow gauge track down. Curt and I have been working on the curved switch at the Knoxville end of what will be a passing siding on the Lumberton modules, which from an operating route point of view is between Hoods and Raccoon Creek.

A further note about the electrical system. We have now changed the power system for the boosters and the auxiliary electronics so that all of it is turned on from the same point, which is the main DCC booster location. Before we made that change, power had to be turned on in three locations. Ask about it if you are interested.

And as many of you know, Bobby Neir has been selling much of Lew's collection. In the midst of that sale, several people asked if the HO division should be buying some of the rolling stock. Although the HO division owns a lot of rolling stock nearly all has been donated. I can't remember at the moment when rolling stock was actually bought for HO division. The HO division did buy all of Lew's Tortoise switch machines. Most clubs do not own any rolling stock at all. The club owns the layout, and the members own the rolling stock. My philosophy has been to not spend the HO division money on rolling stock, but only on the layout, or other things that enhance the capabilities of the club. We do spend money on maintenance of the existing rolling stock.

Curt and I are still operating on Tuesday AM, and frequently have had others join us.

Remember to bring locomotives and controllers for the operating session.

N/Z-Scale Activities - Bruce McElhoe

With each passing day our entry into the DCC world has thrown us into more projects. The N-Scale Advanced Digital Hierarchal Operations Commission has completed an investigation into scissors crossings. We looked into the double

crossing at or near the John Deere dealership. This investigation looked into using four switches and a shallow angled crossing, the Peco brand code 55 unit, and the Kato Unitrack unit.

We evaluated each option on cost, installation complexity, and DCC compatibility. The most expensive approach was the Peco unit, with the least expensive the Kato unit. The most difficult installation would be using individual components with the Peco and Kato units essentially the same. The issue of individual components is that off the shelf items are not available to construct a scissors crossing for the 1.5 inch track separation without major modifications of every piece. The most DCC ready option would be the Kato unit as it's essentially a plug and play assembly. The Peco and piece meal setups would require installing power routing drops and the use of a double throw / double pole switch for polarity reversing system (manual or automatic).

The recommendation of the Advanced Digital Hierarchal Operations Commission is to use the Kato scissors crossing. This is the least expensive option, it's essentially plug and play, and has built-in switch motors that are designed to be operated by one toggle control or can be operated manually. The one drawback is the track spacing is 33 mm versus 1.5 inches. That is to say the spacing is a bit narrower. The second recommendation is to install the Kato unit on the geezer gate connecting the #2 and #3 mainlines. The tracks in this location are not ballasted or glued down. We would only need to pull the spikes holding the tracks in place.

So, now that's out of the way, your ADHOC members would like to hear back from our fellow KAMRI n-scalers for their opinions before committing to any expenditures.

Z-Scale:

Stay tuned. The Z report will be added as it becomes available.

Large Scale Rails - Brad Tutt

What a great time of year to be a model railroad fan, family, friends, great food, Christmas and toy TRAINS! We still have some G gauge battery powered train sets left from the purchase from Ed Hope several months ago that would be great under the Christmas tree for only \$40 each to club members.

And speaking of toy trains, we have been granted the opportunity to create a new, approximately 21 ft x 6-1/2 ft, O/S gauge layout in the hands-on area at the museum. This project will allow the club to design and build an additional classic toy train layout using Lionel three-rail O gauge AND American Flyer S gauge toy trains that most of us grew up with as kids.

This project will not use any museum funds so we will be looking for donations of track, operating features or any hands-on ideas, Plasticville and money for this major project. Since the area will be accessible during museum operation hours, we must PLAN and document the project with realistic time frames like

professionals. Sorry for the adult words since we all are kids at heart but this is huge and potentially expensive obligation.

ALL club members are invited to participate with the large scale division members during all phases of this undertaking. Planning is just now getting started with the initial track design using XTrackCAD (free, legal web version) with preference additions for American Flyer sections. ANY help and ideas will be helpful to maximize our efforts to create a multi-level “masterpiece” that invites children to have buttons to push and features to operate using larger toy trains from yesteryear. Let us know if you want a copy of the program and software training session so we can use email to exchange ideas.

PLEASE help with Christmas in the Garden operations, sign-up sheet in club area. Watch club calendar for event planning and have a great holiday.

KAMRI Web Site – Bruce McElhoe, Web Site Moderator

It’s ho-ho-ho time again! We are into the season of parties and showcasing the garden railroad. So, keep safe and please take notes of what train goodies you find under the tree. It’s always fun to share those items with the rest of us.

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