

The SCOOP

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The newsletter for the Knoxville Area Model Railroad Club, Inc.

Editor: Jim Schall, phone - 423 369-2955, email - Schallj@highland.net

Website : knoxmodelrailroaders.com

Conductor's Comments - Larry Burkholder, President

February's regular meetings will be the 7th and 21st. We will have a short business meeting on the 7th starting about 4:15 pm.

The Children's Museum will hold their annual International Fest on Saturday, February 20th, from 9 am until 5 pm. We need to have all trains running for this event. Please plan to come in to help. If you can't make the whole day please tell your division coordinator so he can manage coverage. For those of you not familiar with the International Fest, it is not to be missed. Non-stop entertainment and foods from around the world. This is a really nice event. Remember that the girl scouts have a special activity early in the morning and between this and the crowd of participants, the back parking lot will fill up fast and early so get there early if you want a reasonable parking space.

Rick Heller's father and brother visited with us for a while at our last meeting and the conversation turned to a fitting memorial for Rick at the club. His father suggested a plaque be placed out in the garden area or somewhere where the public could see it. Further conversations between club members raised the idea of naming the garden area after Rick. Although Rick had very little to do with the garden railroad, his devotion to the club and his interest in all scales makes this worth considering. We can discuss it at our business meeting. The museum would also have to agree since it is technically their garden railroad.

Ex- KAMR member Gary Cameron has advised us of an upcoming semi-annual event, Railgrass Spring 2010, in downtown Kingsport. The event will be held Friday night, May 7, Saturday May 8th and Sunday afternoon May 9th. There will be music, food, a train show, train exhibits, excursions, club meetings and many other activities. He is asking our club to participate by bringing a traveling layout and setting up a table to sell excess equipment. Individuals can also get a table to sell for a small fee. We'll get more information on times and costs as the time gets closer. This is a good chance to promote our club.

With regards to our "Traveling Layout", rumor has it that its construction has been moved to a hotter burner and it should show up at the club for scenic work in the near future. Although it is N-scale, this is considered a club project and help will be needed from many members. More on how you can help will be discussed at our next meeting. We need to have it completed for the Kingsport event if we plan to attend.

This is another reminder that the 2010 club dues are needed. There are still quite a few of you who haven't paid. Give checks or cash to Bob Strickland at our next meeting or mail it to him.

HO Division – Alex Cameron

Here are the dates for February, 2010. Regular club meeting is on the first Sunday, February 7. The third Sunday, February 21, will be an operating session, starting about 1:30. Saturday work sessions will be on February 13 and February 27, starting about 9:30. Thursday work sessions will be on February 4, 11, 18, and 25 starting at 9:30.

The attendance on Thursdays has returned to the pre holiday average. We have actually had more attendance on the work Saturdays.

We had great attendance again for the January operating session, with enough people to run most of the trains, most with 2 man crews. It was raining that day, and perhaps that is also why we had a lot of visitors. It was a little chaotic at times. At the beginning, we had an electrical problem with the yard drill lead. We ran the four train passenger train schedule again. It still has some bugs.

We have been laying narrow gauge track on the mountain in the corner. The engine terminal work creeps along. The problems with the lift bridge, and the approach track to that, have gotten worse. Our thinking is that the change in humidity with winter weather has caused the problems, but I don't recall such problems in years past.

We worked on several track/operational problems that have shown up in recent sessions. We had several dead pieces of rail that now have drops on them, and we added a light bulb to one Tortoise in the yard that was causing a short when it threw.

We have now added a display panel for the upper main line through the mountain area, but all the detectors for that are not yet working. We are having to add LEDs for the sensors that are in tunnels.

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

Remember to bring locomotives and controllers for the operating session.

N/Z-Scale Activities - Bruce McElhoe, N Coordinator

I do believe that January 2010 simply froze off the calendar! But that doesn't mean we didn't make headway on some of our ongoing projects. Our official bagel man Phil Brooks had a marathon construction project modifying the code 55 switches for our show layout. Next on the agenda will be to transport the layout modules to his house in preparation of another marathon day of laying roadbed and track.

The spur into the icing house has been installed by your coordinator. Next is to ballast and add power feeds. Then on to the adjacent spur that will go to a yet to be designated business. Bob Strickland has been sneaking in and working on the hill side that runs along the viewing window between the public area and our n-scale room. Our town on the hill between the coal mine and the industrial area will be getting a bit of a facelift. There's an effort to make a photo backdrop on the wall behind the yard modules as well. We're also looking into adding a tenement building on the street paralleling the main road. Larry Burkholder has the building kit and plans to see if it will fit the area.

The N-Scale Advanced Digital Hierarchal Operations Commission has been continuing investigating the installation of scissors crossing. The general consensus is to use the Kato Unitrack crossing but to install it on the geezer gate. This will make for a much

simpler installation as there is no ballast or other landscaping to deal with. Hobby Town has this in stock and we are considering a purchase in the near future.

Some of us have recently installed decoders in some of our motive power. We are keeping a logbook at the museum that lists the engine address and other information. This is a good reference for us to use when changing address codes in order to avoid duplication whenever possible. This book also contains 'how to' information for re-programming. Note that we still need to install a programming track that can be connected to our clubs computer. This will allow advanced programming using the installed DCC software package.

Z-Scale:

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

Large Scale Rails - Brad Tutt

Stay tuned. The large scale report will be added upon receipt.

KAMRI Web Site - Bruce McElhoe, Web Site Moderator

We've survived another holiday season plus a frigid start for 2010. Makes you want to hide in your train rooms and work on important projects. Please feel free to share a word or two and even a photo of what your into on our web site.

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.