

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

The year moves on quickly and we have reached the deadline for 2010 club dues payment. If you have not paid your \$25 by the end of our first March meeting on the 7th you will be dropped from the club rolls and will not be allowed to participate in club activities or receive club mailings. At last count there were about 18 who have not paid.

The club will operate trains for a couple hundred pre-school children and their parents and teachers on the evening of Friday the 5th as they celebrate a Thomas Tank Engine evening at the museum. They will enjoy our trains and hear stories about Thomas.

Our next museum open house will be Sunday the 21st from 1 to 4 pm.

On Saturday, February 20th, the club operated all our layouts for the museum's International Festival. Over 1600 people attended the event which featured food, crafts, and entertainment from representatives of over two dozen countries. Financially this was the best International Festival ever held by the museum, with a profit of approximately \$6,000 expected. A large number of adults and children enjoyed our trains. I want to thank the HO Division for the excellent clean-up job they did in their area prior to the festival and thanks to Ken Klipple for making the special effort of crawling under the caboose to clear the garden railroad tracks of ice so it could operate Saturday.

While I'm handing out thanks, the museum director asked me to pass on her thanks to Bob Redlinger, Mike Lynch, Clif Johnson, Chris Lewis, Oscar Lidstrom, and Sherri McElmurry who helped paint the museum's Gallery II walls on February 24th. It didn't take us very long and doing these chores shows the museum how much we appreciate their hosting our club at the museum.

HO Division - Alex Cameron

Many thanks to all those members who showed up for the International Fest!!!

Here are the dates for March, 2010. Regular club Sunday meeting on the first Sunday, March 7. The third Sunday, March 21, will be an operating session, starting about 1:30. Saturday work sessions will be on March 13 and March 27, starting about 9:30. Thursday work sessions will be on March 4, 11, 18, and 25 starting at 9:30. The attendance on Thursdays has dropped off again. We have continued to have more attendance on the work Saturdays.

We had great attendance again for the February operating session, with enough people to run all of the trains, most with 2 man crews. It was a little chaotic at times as usual. We ran the four train passenger train schedule again.

The work on the narrow gauge track on the mountain proceeds in fits and starts. The engine terminal work creeps along. The problems with the lift bridge, and the approach track to that, have still not been resolved. We rebuilt the turnout control panel for Lumberton, with the control switches now mounted on the track diagram. That seems to make things much easier to use. We should have put all of the tracks and industrial locations on the diagram. Unfortunately, I didn't think far enough ahead on that. The location detector board for the mountain has been repaired, but I only have a few of the sensors hooked up. We have added two more Tortoise power transformers, so now each major power district has its own transformer.

We worked on several track/operational problems that have shown up in recent sessions. We have been spending a lot of time on these sorts of problems. Many of them are a result of poor workmanship, for instance, missing drops, and poor or bad solder joints (I know that I am the culprit on a number of those). We have also seen a number of problems because of bad sub roadbed (warping, bad joints), bad roadbed (uneven) and bad track laying (different tie thickness, kinks).

Another thing that I have noticed, which follows from the problems mentioned above, is that the layout really cannot handle large steam locomotives. Large 6 coupled, 8 coupled, and 10 coupled locomotives and some articulated locomotives all have problems. If we want to run those sorts of locomotives, we will have to have better track.

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

I don't trust groundhogs anymore! With each passing weekend I've wanted to transport our traveling layout modules over to Phil Brooks. That mission was finally completed on the last weekend of February. Between snow, ice, travel, family, festivals, etc., it's been a struggle. Anyway, the layout is now entering the next phase of construction - laying track! In just a few hours Phil and I managed to trace out the track locations, sidings, and the yard. After I got out of the way Phil glued down most of the roadbed and cut in the river.

It's time for those that want to pitch in to step forward. We do have some of the building kits in house that need assembling. We also need a few hundred trees. It's hoped that all of the track laying will be completed and the modules brought up to the club for detailing by the end of March.

The spur into the icing house has been electrified, mostly ballasted, and the tracks cleaned and train tested. Bob Strickland continues to sneak in and work on the new hill side below the public viewing window. He's still adding

landscaping and trees. Our town on the hill between the coal mine and the industrial area has been getting a bit of a facelift. Larry Burkholder has built up some apartment buildings up behind the main street row of businesses.

We now have the Kato Unitrack scissors crossing with controller in hand. This unit will be located on the geezer gate connecting the #2 and #3 mains. This will make for a much simpler installation as there is no ballast or other landscaping to deal with. Hopefully this installation will be completed this month.

During our first Sunday gathering we are planning some housekeeping. That is we will be inventorying everything currently stashed under the n-scale layout. The intension is to purge what's not wanted or needed and organize the remaining stuff!

Z-Scale:

The z-scale layout has been 'officially' declared complete! We have had almost continuous running for the last couple of open houses as well as the international festival.

Large Scale Rails - Brad Tutt

We have been busy work on several projects and way too much "planning". The new large scale layout planned for the hands-on-area has gone through several versions. The idea of having Lionel and American Flyer both has been abandoned for space limitations. At this point, we are planning to use O gauge Lionel and feature the AEC rolling stock with an energy theme. We plan to include the reactor, loading dock, burro crane on the top level. Also in discussion is how to make the layout height adjustable for kids to see and old men to work on.

We are planning to use some of the glass from the basement to help cut costs and are working on a model of the area for final project approval. We have also been thinking of ways to fund the project that include repair clinic and other options. We would appreciate any ideas and welcome everyone to join in. and regress back to your childhood.

Come and join us anytime and keep tootin' down the track.

KAMRI Web Site - Bruce McElhoe, Web Site Moderator

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.