

BAY AREA GARDEN RAILWAY SOCIETY

TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

JULY 2024



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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

'TIS THE SEASON TO BE BUSY!

BUSY JUNE

My railroad was open from 9:30 to 2:30 on June 23 when **more than a hundred** adults and kids stopped by. Very few were BAGRS members; the majority were young families, attracted by my postings on Next Door. Liz and I enjoyed meeting more neighbors and watching young boys entranced by the trains. Young girls were kept busy counting things around the railroad.

From 4:00 to 7:00 16 BAGRS members enjoyed a North Bay Area Get Together fueled by BBQ fare. A new member planning a RR was very happy to get to see another RR and get some valuable tips about RR design and construction.

BUSY JULY

I will be thinking about BAGRS less than usual in July as Liz and I celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary in Alaska. We get to travel by boat, plane, rental car and two railroads, the White Pass railroad and the Alaskan Railroad from Anchorage to Denali, and five days later from Denali to Anchorage.



OPEN RAILROADS

Scheduling of BAGRS open railroads in August, September and October is in process. At the time of writing, only 10 members have registered interest in opening. Last year, there were 19 open railroads in those months so we are extending the deadline to respond to the Open Railroad Survey.

See the next page for details.



ACCUCRAFT OPEN DAY & SWAP MEET

Is scheduled for **Saturday September 28** and I hope that many of you have the date circled on your calendar. More details in August & September!

FALL LIVESTEAMING

Our live steamers will be out and about and waving the flag for BAGRS over the next several months. For dates, go to the BAGRS website at this page:

OUR NEW WEBSITE

Our 'User Testing' of the new site is complete and we have a step-by-step plan to switch over to the new website in the second half of September. We will share more information before then.



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

NOT FALLING OVER OURSELVES TO BE OPEN



'FALL' OPEN RAILROADS

We have received only 10 responses to our 'Fall' Open Railroads Survey. 19 railroads were open in the same months last year and we are hoping to get much closer to that figure this year.

To encourage a better showing, **we are extending the deadline to respond to the survey from June 24 to July 24.** We will not schedule any railroad to be open in the first half of August.

We can do this because the 2 responders who could be open in the first half of August can also open after that.

This is the link to the survey that is taking members just 3 minutes to complete.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BAGRSOpenRRs>



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

REGIONAL GATHERINGS AND AN EARLY CALL FOR NEW DIRECTORS

REGIONAL GATHERINGS

There are a number of 'Regional Gatherings' around the US this year. A 'Midwest Gathering' was held a month ago, and there are 2 more in Atlanta and San Diego. I went to the Midwest Gathering in the Kansas City area and my report about it appears later in this edition of T&T.

I enjoyed the gathering more than our own 2023 National Conventions, in part because I wasn't worn out by all the time I and others had invested in a convention that was too long/ complicated/expensive (*all misjudgments that the Sacramento GRS is avoiding for 2025*). But there were other important reasons too.

Many elements of a national convention were incorporated in this smaller regional gathering. 15 interesting railroads were open over 3 days. There were no buses so you never arrived when a railroad was overcrowded and could not talk to the owners. About 100 folk attended from 14 states so I got to chat with folk from many areas of the US. The hotel was adequate and cheap! The closing dinner was informal, modest, fun and inexpensive. Best of all, everyone seemed to be having a good time. My report has open RR images and here are 6 more.



YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS A FEW GOOD MEN OR WOMEN

To step up to serve on the 2025/6 Board of Directors.

A number of current directors, including me, have served on the board for as many years as we can be useful. The hunt for at least three new directors, **3 members who have not served before, will begin in September for the 2025/6 Board.**

You don't have wait to be asked! You can reach out to me or Roger Nicholson, Vice President, to learn more about this opportunity to make a difference for BAGRS.



THE MOKAN GARDEN RAILROAD GATHERING

A report by Mick Spilsbury



The 3-day gathering in Kansas City hosted by the MoKan Garden Railroaders was a great success. Close to 100 participants gathered from 14 states—Kansas, Missouri, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Maryland, North Carolina, Colorado, Arizona, and California (one from the latter—me!)

15 Railroads were open during the 3 days and were the highlight of the meet and, as usual, presented a potpourri of styles and scope, as the following 12 images of railroads illustrate. I have been featuring images and videos of the railroads on GR News’ social media channels. There were also clinics, model and photo contests and a closing dinner.

Other highlights for me were meeting garden railroaders from so many states and the warm welcome from the MoKan garden railroaders. There was a wonderful spirit at the gathering, a sense of community among participants from many areas of the USA. I also believe that everyone learned something new about our hobby. I certainly did.

Many members of the MoKan GR Club contributed to the success of the gathering under the leadership of David Peerbolte (who also has a lovely garden railroad). I was struck by the teamwork and camaraderie of the group.

THE RAILROADS



Craft River & Critter Creek RR

This mature RR is elevated and winds its way over, around and between thriving lush plantings and over an impressive creek, all of which frames operating consists beautifully.

G & L RR

This is an operating RR that “*will always be under construction*”! And there is plenty of space to add to the 600+ feet of track in place, which already accommodates long consists, running across trestles and past townships.





THE MOKAN GARDEN RAILROAD GATHERING

A report by Mick Spilsbury

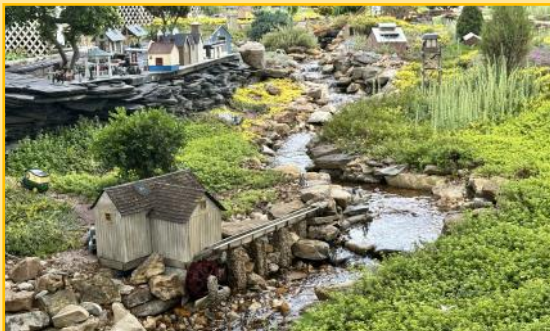


B & F RR

A very busy railroad. Five trains hustle along the tracks, passing an astonishing number of colorful plants and landscape details and a large water feature. It's a lot to take in and a great RR for video-taking.

Mike & Kelly's Gardner Division

An elevated track designed for live steam operation which also enables great views of the many scratch-built, innovative and unique items of rolling stock and the diesels hauling them.

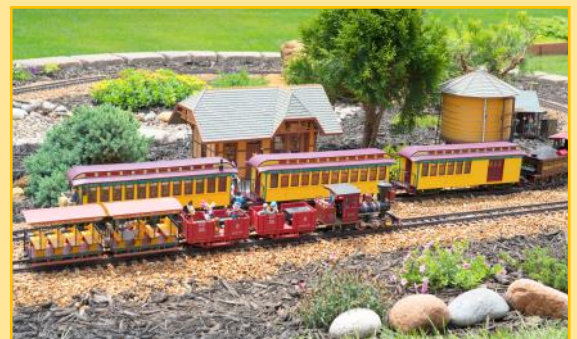


Dutch Valley RR

A lovely RR with a stunning assortment of groundcovers and scale trees and delightful trackside dioramas. A railroad to be enjoyed from a nearby seating area on a summer afternoon with a glass of wine!

Grizzly Flats Kansas Division

A tidy and pretty homage to Disney. Plants have been carefully selected and maintained beautifully. As you would expect for a Disney enterprise, the RR is in pristine shape!



K & W RR

This 20-year-old railroad is aging gracefully. Stone buildings and numerous, unique track side details make a delightful pastoral scene. Long trestles take elevation out of the sloping site and provide great viewing spots.



THE MOKAN GARDEN RAILROAD GATHERING

A report by Mick Spilsbury



Peculiar Junction RR

Trains run around and over a massive water feature on this established line. An aerial view from a deck high above the line adds to the fun. A loco collection in the RR shed is impressive.

Rocky Ridge RR

Numerous trees with dark green foliage, contrasting bright green ground cover and an attractive pond make a lovely setting for this shaded RR. Trains appear then disappear a lot - always a great feature of a garden RR.



Shagbark Valley RR

Woodland was cleared recently for this large new RR. Locomotives run around 2 large loops but much work lies ahead. The lady of the RR put a hurricane together the night before its opening to explain some broken buildings! Love it!

Irons Horse RR

A three-foot cascading waterfall is the centerpiece of this relatively new RR. A large raised oval of track circles the waterfall while a side track heads to the grandchildren's tree house.



Never-Too-Late Narrow Gauge RR

Years of procrastination melted away when retirement heralded the onset of construction, which continues while the RR operates with a great backstory.

From the Editor's Desk



Roger Nicholson lives in Union City, California, and operates the [Crystal Cove & Rose Railroad](#).

- **On the Cover.** A crowd of spectators on Jim Ralph's *Carnivale on the Green* railroad examine two SW 1500s that showed up in El Dorado, California, 150 miles from the Bay Area. Those things really get around. For a report on Jim's open house, check out the "Member Update" section of this issue.
- I had promised a video of the "Promontory Party" at Joyce Hennessey and Bill Lavender's railroad. Here it is: [Promontory Party](#)

I am in the middle of a coast-to-coast driving trip to transport a car that we purchased in New Jersey back to California. Yeah, I know I could have shipped it, but what would be the fun in that? Since my wife (also known as "super grandma") decided to go with my son, daughter-in-law, and my 1-year-old grandson to Puerto Rico instead for some work-related business, I'm doing most of the drive alone over a two-week period. Before I get back to California, I'll be meeting up with them in Seattle where we will all take a one-week Alaska cruise. It turns out the Mick Spilsbury will also be on a Alaska cruise at the same time, but on a different ship. I'll be sure to wave at him when we pass him up in the Inland Passage.

Such things make it challenging to finish the June *T&T* or to attend any BAGRS June open houses.

I'm trying to see any railroad related things I can along the way, and I've found a few so far. I've been meeting up with old friends and making new ones along the way. In New Jersey, I met one of my son's patients (My oldest son is an orthopedic surgeon who specializes in shoulders). His patient is building a large two-rail O-scale layout in his basement. He loves to tell stories, and I enjoyed listening to them. Some of the challenges and dangers he faced taking some of his railroad pictures are a bit harrowing. He is a perfectionist, and the quality of his benchwork is really something to behold.





He also wanted to give me lots of stuff. Among those things is this brand new, never used railroad crossing sign that he somehow talked the Department of Transportation folks who manufacture them into giving him for free. Actually, they gave him two: the first one had a scratch (which I still haven't located), so he went back and asked to exchange it, and they gave him another one and told him he could



keep the first one as well.

This sign is the real deal—I saw many of these same signs as I drove across Pennsylvania and New York backroads avoiding the toll roads (I am taking the long way driving toward home).

My wife will be so thrilled when I get to Seattle and she gets to see how much space this baby takes up in the trunk of her new car. Maybe. . . maybe *not* . . .



Niagara Falls was pretty amazing. As Greg Hile noted on my Facebook, “Now, THAT’S a water feature!” The Canadians have a funicular railway to get people down to their boats (The Canadian version of our “Maid of the Mist” boats). They also have zip lines over the Niagara river. Those Canadians know how to have some fun . . .

I stopped at the Medina Railroad Museum in New York on my way to Niagara Falls.

Check out the 1:32-scale Zephyr.

The Medina museum has a large, operating HO-scale layout which depicts many sites in the New York area.



I visited the largest O-scale layout that I have ever seen located right in the middle of the Ohio countryside, surrounded by Amish farms. It is the *Corner Field Model Railroad Museum & Trading Post*. The pictures don't do it justice. You just can't capture everything that was going on here. There must have been 30 trains running, and many of them were really long. There are no mirrors here—the layout is really *that big*. There were hundreds of detailed scenes with moving parts and lights. This is the O-scale layout I dreamed of having when I was a kid playing with my Lionel set. You can see more of this amazing layout on their YouTube channel: [Corner Field Hobby Railfan](#)



Here's a 1950s-era train that has been turned into a diner in the middle of South Dakota.

One highlight of my trip was riding the 1880s Train in South Dakota. The train is located right near Mt. Rushmore, and runs between Hill City and Keystone. My train was pulled by a 2-6-6-2T articulated Mallet. On the trip to Keystone, the train was "robbed" by armed men and the payroll was stolen.

The trip is still in progress, and I expect to see more interesting railroad related things along the way.

Roger ■



You are invited to attend the July 7/20/2024 meeting of the SJVGRS at 1337 Quail St. Los Banos, CA. Time 11 - 1.

Moccasin Gap Garden Railroad Rail Pass



*Moccasin Gap
Garden Railroad*

Rich Johnson
Los Banos, CA 93635
209-710-4977

Acrylic Scale Buildings & Laser-art
www.rjgardenrailroad.com - Rjlatheart@gmail.com

Please bring your own chair if possible.

Also open will be the:

Rolling T Garden Railroad

1316 Chukar st. Los Banos, Ca. 93635

Rail Pass



*Rolling T
Garden Railroad*

Craig & Jeff
Los Banos, CA 93635
RollingTGardenRailroad.com
650-341-7550

OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday, July 20, 2024

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Moccasin Gap Railroad

Johnson—1337 Quail St., Los Banos, CA 93635

Welcome to Rich Johnson's Moccasin Gap Garden Railroad Los Banos, California. A rebuild of most of the tables due to age, weather, sun and the wrong wood after 5 years made replacement necessary. Our new raised railroad is at a height of 39 inches.

More information and many photos may be found at www.rjgardenrailroad.com

Please bring your own chairs if possible.

OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday, July 13, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Uplands Railroad



Malouf—225 Uplands Drive, Hillsborough, CA

The **Uplands Railroad** is a oval loop which switches on and off a figure 8. Track is finished but still building structures. Miniature trees and groundcover have been planted.

See this railroad on YouTube: [Uplands Railroad, Hillsborough, CA - 23 September 2023](#)

OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday, July 13, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Greenhills Railroad



Murray—842 Helen Dr, Millbrae, CA

The **Greenhills Railroad** is one of the top rated in Northern California. It is in a lushly landscaped 45-year-old semi-Japanese garden with 350 plants, including 250 varieties. Live steam engines run on 550 feet of track. It has 3 waterfalls and 20 bridges, including an 8-foot copy of the Hell's Gate Bridge in New York, which took about 1000 hours to build. There are numerous meticulous, scratch built buildings, including a slate mine building with a precise powerhouse and a belt-powered lineshaft. A scratch built Tudor house has 2000 handmade teak shingles, 1500 bricks, and an elaborate steam museum in the back. The layout was on the cover and centerfold of "Garden Railways."

See this railroad on YouTube: [Green Hills Railroad - 2023 NGRC Preview](#)

Photo by Jeff Namba

OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday, July 13, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

White Wolf Logging Railroad



Elam—2203 Pullman Ave, Belmont, CA

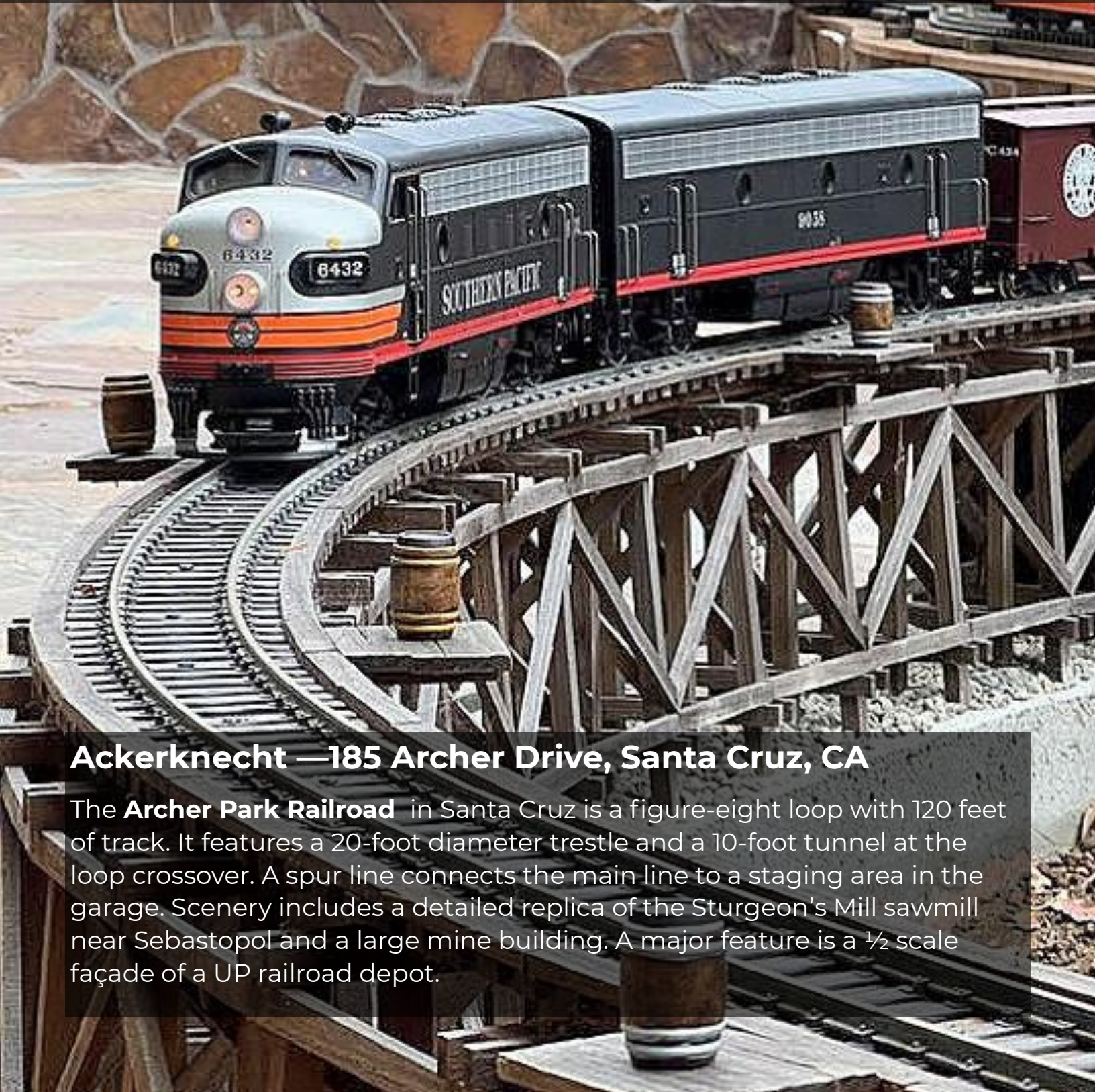
The **White Wolf Logging Railroad** is inspired by the logging railroads of the late nineteenth century. The overall goal has been to fit the railroad into the natural grade of the yard, as we are on a hillside. The average grade of the finished railroad is about 5 percent. The layout features several bridges, a grade loop, tunnels and lots of trestles. Locomotives are steam era geared locos using battery power and AirWire control. Note: layout is at bottom of hill accessed by stairs and gravel paths. Not recommended for mobility limited folks.

Photo by Jeff Namba

OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday, July 13, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Archer Park Railroad



Ackerknecht —185 Archer Drive, Santa Cruz, CA

The **Archer Park Railroad** in Santa Cruz is a figure-eight loop with 120 feet of track. It features a 20-foot diameter trestle and a 10-foot tunnel at the loop crossover. A spur line connects the main line to a staging area in the garage. Scenery includes a detailed replica of the Sturgeon's Mill sawmill near Sebastopol and a large mine building. A major feature is a ½ scale façade of a UP railroad depot.

OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday, July 13, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Little Bear Railroad



Hays—1722 Campbell Ave, San Jose, CA

The **Little Bear railroad** was built in 2016 and was converted to DCC in 2017. In 2020 the railroad was extended by adding two small mountains with two bridges, tunnel, and trestle to get to the upper mountain loop. In addition, we planted both the old and new areas (with the expert help of Nancy Norris). The layout is about 75-feet long and 9-feet wide, with about 240 feet of track and 20 structures. All trains and structures are from the steam era. We run both DCC electric steam and 7/8th live steam on the railroad.

OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday, July 13, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sonora Pacific Narrow Gauge Railroad



LaBarba—741 Redwood Drive, Santa Cruz, CA

The **Sonora Pacific NGRR** is based on California narrow gauge railroads in the 1930s and 1840s, and consists of a 54-foot-long dog bone layout located on top of a 5-foot-high concrete retaining wall with approximately 150 feet of track. A 6-foot-tall handlaid fieldstone retaining wall acts as dramatic backdrop and mountain for the railroad. Various small conifers, and ground covers compliment the stone work. Two 6-foot-long tunnels conceal the turn around at each end with 4-foot radius curves. The 5-foot-tall Wild Cat Canyon Waterfall runs behind railroad. Several bridges with handmade cut stone clad piers. FN3/ running scale AMS & Bachmann equipment. Engines and rolling stock weathered with crews. A highly detailed town and mine scene are under construction.

Tri-Valley Railroad

OPEN HOUSE

Saturday & Sunday
July 27th & July 28th

10:00am - 5:00pm
181 Lowell Drive

Photos encouraged

Entry is FREE

Children Welcome

Free food & drinks

Dear friends,

This year's Tri-Valley Open House will be better than ever. Please come and enjoy it with your children, friends, and family!

Here is a video for you to see:

Click on the link below to see a short video from previous open houses:

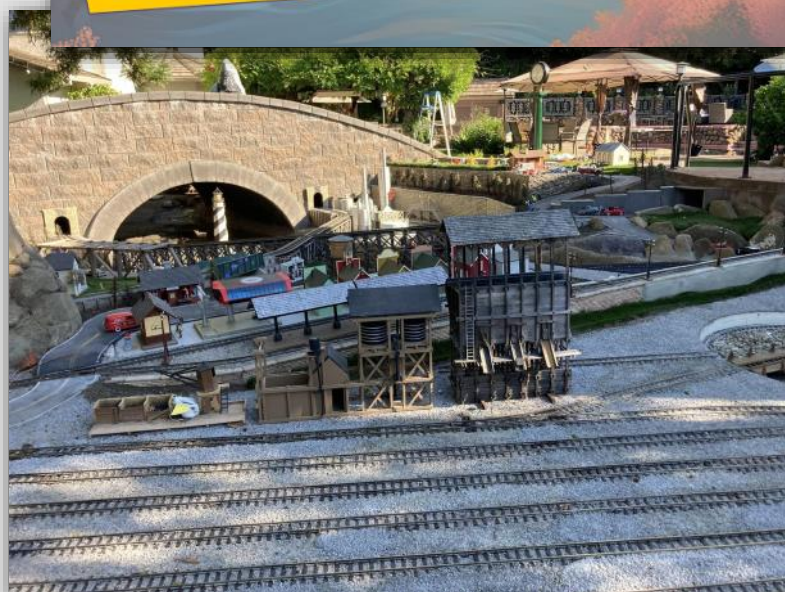
https://youtube.com/shorts/B29IQ-Y_64k?feature=share

For your children: Besides seeing the railroad, I will have a new scavenger hunt—it's great fun for adults as well!

As usual, there will be **free drinks and refreshments** including all or some of the following: Cotton Candy, Hot Dogs, Chips, Cookies, and Soft Serve Ice Cream with all of the toppings.

Please stop by and enjoy my Tri-Valley Railroad and feel free to invite your entire family and your friends. I know you're going to enjoy it and it's FREE!

Here are some photos from my previous open house on July 2–4, 2023:



OPEN RAILROAD—Saturday-Sunday, July 27-28, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Tri-Valley Railroad



Silverman—181 Lowell Drive, Danville, CA

The **Tri-Valley Railroad** features over 900 feet of track, and an 8-foot-wide arched bridge overlooks the entire layout. A large caboose houses a workshop, controls, and storage. The layout features a 7-door roundhouse with a 53-inch turntable and a large switching yard. A large mountain supports three waterfalls, two streams, ponds, and two long tunnels. Several large trestles cross the ponds. The railroad is DCC powered with 41 pneumatic turnouts. 20 engine decoders and 12 sound decoders are installed in the 22 diesel and steam locomotives.

See this railroad on YouTube: [Tri-Valley Railroad - 2023 NGRC Preview](#)

Photo by Jeff Namba

OPEN RAILROAD—Sunday, July 28, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Southern Pacific Peninsula Garden Railroad**NEW! UNDER
CONSTRUCTION****Burke —1339 Delwood St., Vallejo, CA 94591**

Having broken ground in June of 2024, the SP Peninsula Garden RR will be a 350 ft. 1/29 scale layout showcasing the Southern Pacific's commuter trains from early 1941. The goal is to provide a pseudo-prototypical display of interwar mass transit from all over the Bay Area, including a future fleet of custom P-8 and P-10 Aristocraft Pacifics, a couple of Sacramento Northern's GE Steeple cabs, the Key System's bridge unit and one-off Steeple shunter, and even the IER "red cars" that ran across the Bay Bridge just before the start of WWII. The majority of this layout will be a showcase of 3-D printed locomotives and coach cars, laser cut rolling stock, and CNC milled buildings all from my workshop garage. All locomotives are battery powered, WiFi controlled with bespoke ESP32 controllers. Structures will also be a mix of 3-D printed, laser cut, and CNC carved, with the 2025 goal of showcasing the legendary 3rd and Townsend commuter station. Expect only 30% of track laid (all 3 loops will be ready for NGRC 2025) and frantic printing, but stay for some cold drinks and good music.

OPEN RAILROAD—Sunday, July 28, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Miniature Plant Kingdom Railroad & Fox Hollow Railroad



Herzog—13404 Harrison Grade Place, Sebastopol, CA

Miniature Plant Kingdom Railroad and **Fox Hollow Railroad**. We have 3 layouts. One is 25x75 feet and has waterfalls, mountains, a forest, tunnels, a western town, and a farm. Another is 25x75 feet and contains a town with trolleys, a zoo, and farms. There are two tracks around the layout. Becky's layout is 11x14 feet and is battery controlled. All layouts are raised beds and are landscaped with miniature trees, shrubs and grasses, some being over 50 years old. A fourth layout 10x40 feet is in the beginning stage of construction.

Photo by Jeff Namba

OPEN RAILROAD—Sunday, July 28, 2024

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Bob & Linda Elia Family Railroad



Elia—8430 David Ct, Gilroy, CA

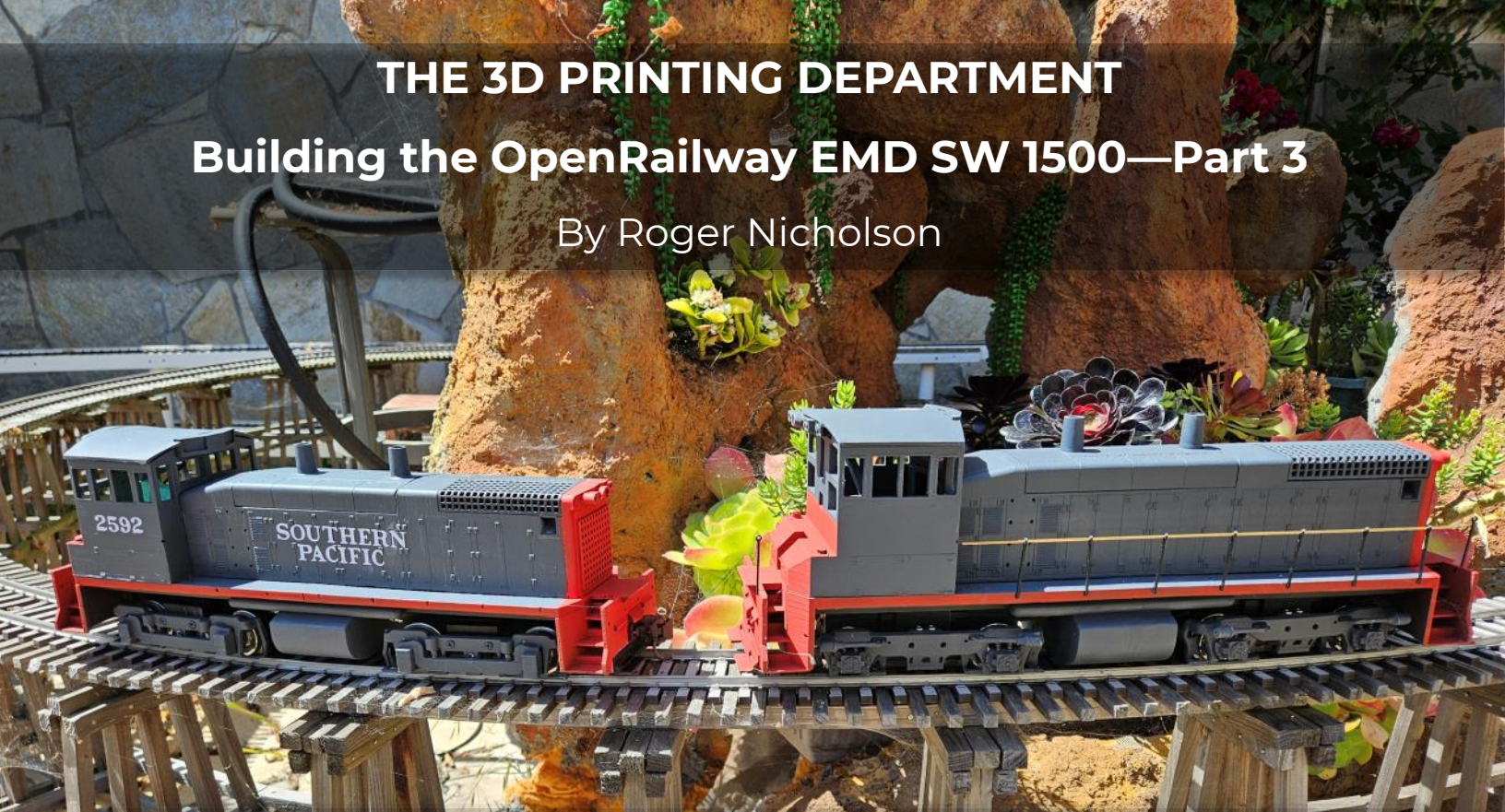
The **Bob & Linda Elia Family Railroad** has two loops on different levels and is not modeled after any particular era. The lower section consists of 80 feet of track crossing two bridges and a tunnel. There is a town and farm with a passing siding and spur. A point-to-point trolley line operates in town. The upper section is based on a logging theme, consisting of about 30 feet of track with two spurs, a waterfall, a creek, and two curved trestles. The rolling stock includes both steam and diesel, and operates on track power. The railroad features Bob's renowned wooden bridges and trestles.

Photo by Jeff Namba

THE 3D PRINTING DEPARTMENT

Building the OpenRailway EMD SW 1500—Part 3

By Roger Nicholson



My fleet of OpenRailway EMD SW 1500s had grown to three at this point: One 1:32 scale unit, and two 1:29 scale unit, the second of which had been built out of “spare” parts. I decided to learn to paint. Since these locomotives were designed with a Southern Pacific lighting package, it was apparent that I needed to paint them in the appropriate SP colors. The specific colors were *SP Lark Dark Grey* and *SP Scarlet Red*.

I really thought that finding the right paint would be the easy part: It wasn't.

The cost of painting

I paid a visit to a local model railroad hobby shop to acquire some paint, figuring that they would have the appropriate colors. I made an important discovery: “hobby paint” is really expensive!



I bought a single 1-oz bottle each of the two colors, and they cost \$7.00 per ounce! That is \$14 for 2-oz of paint! Fourteen dollars is also the cost of a decent burrito these days, just to keep it in perspective. This may be fine if you are painting a locomotive in N scale or HO scale, but painting a G scale locomotive would require considerably more than an ounce of paint. I could easily run up a “three burrito” bill for each locomotive that I wanted to paint. There had to be a better way. What I needed was a “taco priced” paint job that *looked* like a “three burrito” paint job.

“Save Your Money”

Fortunately, the solution to my problem came in the form of a very timely article by Dave Frediani that was published in the June 2024 issue of the *Trellis & Trestle*. The title of the article was “Save Your Money”—yeah, this is my kind of article! It was all about how to use cheap acrylic paints on your large-scale rolling stock. This was the answer to my dilemma, so I purchased a variety of acrylic paints in various colors from Amazon, Walmart and Michael’s. Each 2-oz bottle of paint cost under \$2.

A single shade of grey

I set about attempting to concoct a color that was somewhat close to “SP Lark Dark Grey.” It isn’t just “grey”—you can’t get it by simply mixing black and white, because there are some other colors in it as well. After a lot of trial and error mixing various colors of acrylics together, I came up with a recipe that I was actually happy with. It may not be a perfect “SP Lark Dark Grey,” but it was adequate for my needs.

The “SP Scarlet Red” was much easier—I found a color “off the shelf” that was pretty much an exact match without requiring any mixing at all.



Painting preparation

Now that I had developed my methods and materials, I proceeded to prepare to paint all three of my SW 1500 units.

Prior to painting, in some areas, I smoothed the 3-D printed ABS surface using fine sandpaper and filled unwanted gaps using a two-part auto body glazing putty. In other areas that had fine detail, I didn't do any sanding at all.

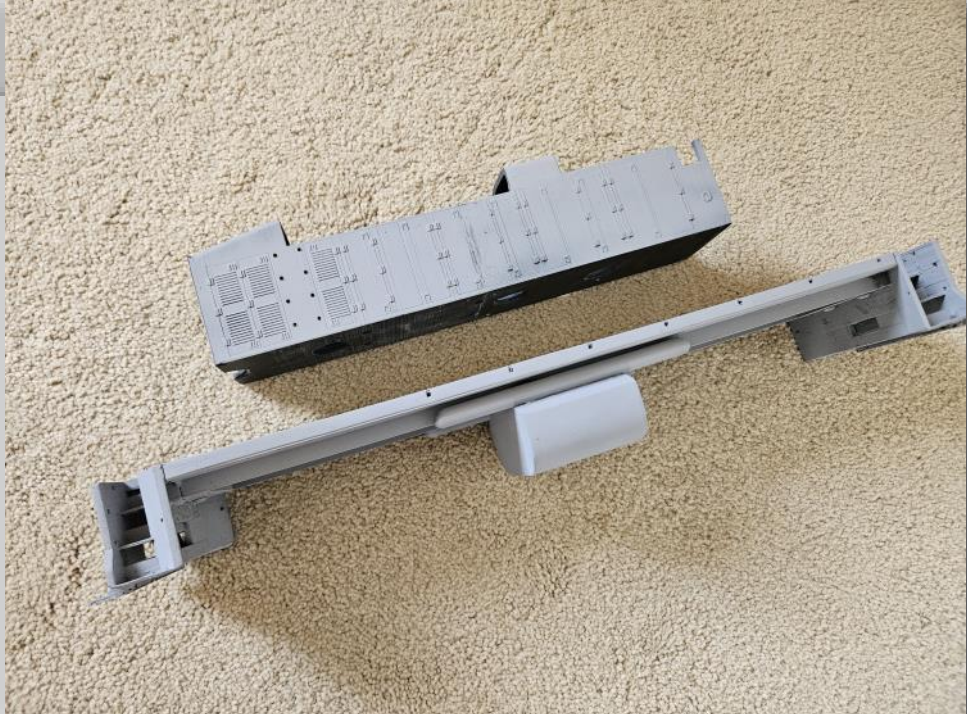
Once my surfaces were prepared, I used a grey automotive primer to paint everything. This provides a great surface for the acrylic to stick to.

I purchased an airbrush and learned how to use it. The kit that I bought came with three different airbrushes and has its own small compressor, and it turned out to be very easy to use.

Dave's recipe called for mixing the acrylic with windshield washer fluid in a 1:1 ratio in order to use it in the airbrush. I had on my shelf some of that green "anti-bug" washer fluid, so I used that. It worked just fine. Perhaps bugs will slide off my paint . . .

As each thin layer of paint is sprayed on, I dried it with a heat gun (Dave used his wife's hair dryer, which I didn't think would be a viable option in my case, since I want to live a long and happy life . . .)

Keep in mind that you are pointing a heat gun at a 3-D printed part—you don't want to get the thing too close, or "you will be sorry." As it turned out, I was not sorry, and I had great success using the heat gun to dry each layer of paint, and it produced a really nice smooth paint surface. I was impressed. Now I have all kinds of other ideas for painting some of my other (non-3-D printed) rolling stock.



I sprayed on multiple layers of grey. I just kept adding layers until I was happy with it. This requires some patience. Once the grey was done, I masked off the areas that I needed in order to paint my version of "SP Scarlet Red."



Again, you need to spray multiple thin layers until you get the coverage and color that you want.

These locomotives were beginning to look like something: At the very least, they were also looking a lot less like they were "3-D printed."

Once the painting was done, I added LED lighting to the front and rear of each locomotive.



Numbers and letters

I decided it was time to try my hand at decals. I examined the different methods—mainly, “water-slide” versus “vinyl.” I decided that I would give vinyl decals a try. My daughter, who is skilled at art and graphic design, gave me a brand new Silhouette Curio cutting tool. This machine will cut very thin vinyl and leave the backing intact, allowing the cut vinyl to be used as a decal, or the negative cut surface as a paint mask. The vinyl itself, when removed from the backing, is 0.08 mm thick, which is approximately 0.003 inches, or 3 mils.

The Curio did a fantastic job of cutting my SP numbers and letters. The surrounding negative material was removed, and the letters and numbers were transferred to “transfer tape.” The transfer tape was then positioned in the appropriate location on the locomotive, and the letters and numbers were pressed onto the surface, and the transfer tape removed. I added decals to the 1:32 SW 1500 unit. I chose number “2592” because [the real SW 1500 that had this number was once located in Newark, California.](#)

(The real 2592 also had Flexicoil trucks—those are being printed now and will replace the AAR Type A switcher trucks currently on the 1:32 scale locomotive.)





I then tried my hand at something different. I took the second 1:29 unit that I built out of “spare parts” (which, you may notice, now sports 3-D printed ABS Flexicoil trucks!) and decided to try my hand at *painting* the numbers and letters directly on the locomotive. I used the negative from the cut vinyl decals, stuck it on the surface and then airbrushed the white letters and numbers onto the locomotive. There was some learning from trial and error here, but in the end, I was pretty happy with the result. The *Crystal Cove and Rose* now has a “flagship” locomotive—the first one that is lettered with the actual name of the railroad (but it won’t be the last, I can assure you.)

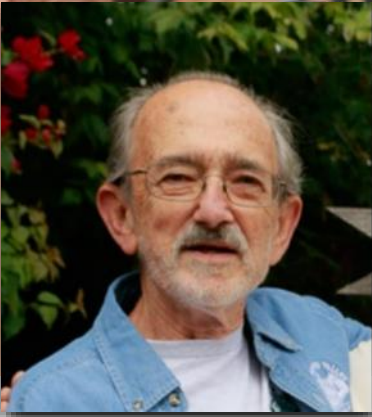
Here’s a YouTube video of number 2592 pulling a few cars around the *Crystal Cove and Rose*: [First test run of my 3D Printed 1:32 scale OpenRailway EMD SW 1500.](#)

Coming up in Part 4 : As they say, “The devil is in the details.” Part 4 will be delayed, since I am away from home for an entire month. ■

Carnivale on the Green: A Railcar Based Traveling Carnival

Rail Cars #52-55: SNAKES, REPTILES AND ELEPHANTS

By Jim Ralph

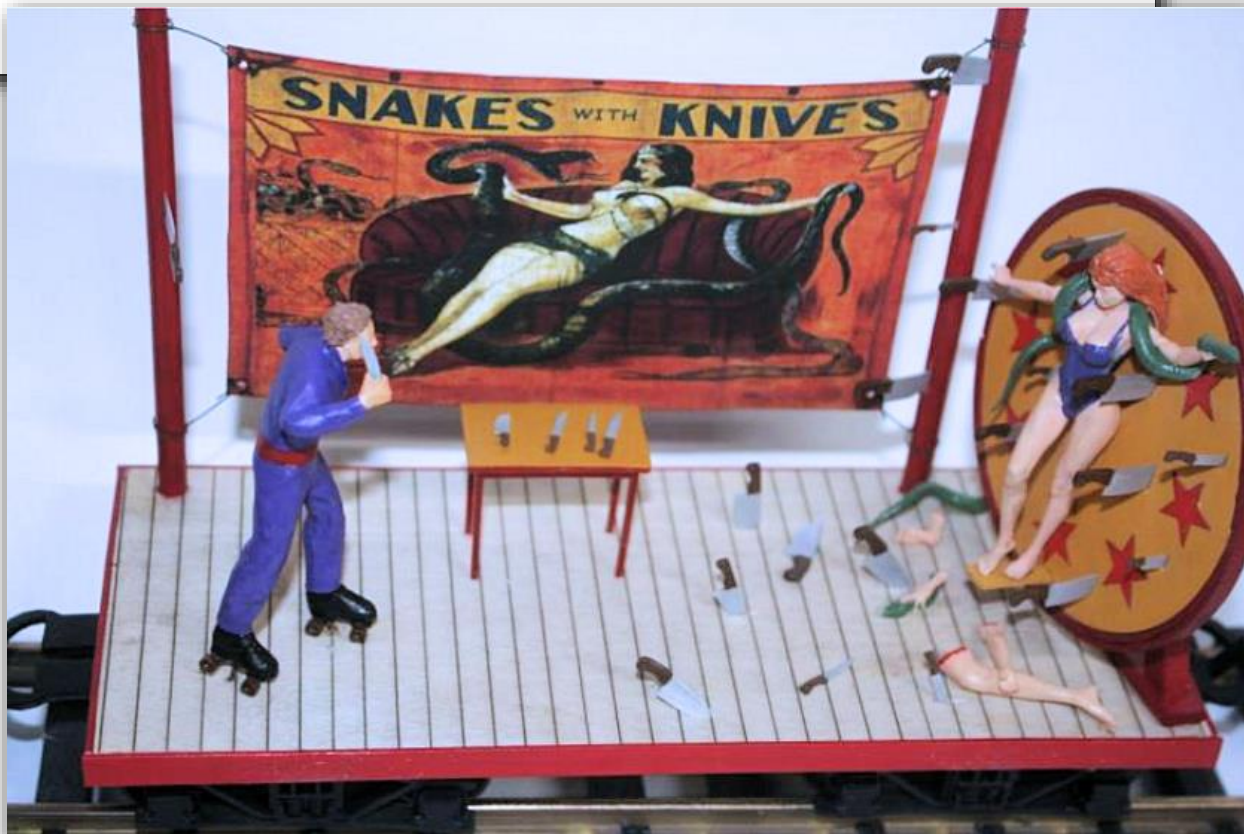


Jim Ralph is a member of BAGRS and the *Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society*, and is the brother of BAGRS member Bill Ralph.

RAIL CAR #52: SNAKES WITH KNIVES

'THE AMAZING BALENSKIS'

The Baleys; Bob, wives Betty #1, Betty #2, Betty #3, and Betty #4 (all will become clear in time) of Bakersfield, along with son Bubba and twin daughters Buffie and Bambie, have been performing as the 'AMAZING BALENSKIS' from Romania with CARNIVALE for many years. In their earlier life, back in Bakersfield, Bob with wife Betty #1 ran a butcher shop called BOB THE BUTCHER, the girls were roller skating car hops at a Giant Orange Drive-In out on Highway 99, while son Bubba collected lizards. Bob and Betty #1 were performing their knife throwing act, when an error made by Bob required a second marriage not good Another performing accident (Bob again) the following year with wife Betty #2 required a third marriage very not good.





RAIL CAR #53/#54: SNAKES ON SKATES/SNAKES ON POLES

Twin Buffie (child of Betty #2)* along with her twin sister Bambi (child of Betty #3)** performed the family friendly daytime act SNAKES ON SKATES.

*Buffie and **Bambi are twins, because both Bettys #2 and #3 are also twins, go figure . .

At night the twins worked the 'adult area' of the carnival performing SNAKES ON POLES. Better money.

ROADSIDE ATTRACTION #20: REPTILE GARDENS

Bubba (child of Betty #1)*** now with a large collection of lizards went on to open the roadside attraction REPTILE GARDENS just outside PORCUPINE GULCH AMUSEMENT PARK in Fremont, and became the sole supplier of the family's reptilian needs.

***Bubba still likes to collect lizards.





RAIL CAR #55: PERFORMING DWARF ELEPHANTS

The story continues Bob did it again****. The twins continued on. Bubba kept collecting lizards. With wife #4 now in pieces and with no more Bettys available, Bob had to give up the act. Staying with CARNIVALE, he changed his name from BOB THE BUTCHER to OMAR-ELEPHANT MASTER, and took over the Dwarf Elephant attraction. OMAR, with his butchering skills got the meat supply contract with CARNIVALE'S food service dept.*****

All is well, CARNIVALE is headed down the tracksTrue story True

***Go back to the RAIL CAR #52 photo and note Butcher Bob's shoes to see why his aim never improved not too bright, but True

****Dwarf elephants were a scam. Just newborns. Which brings to question his meat supply business Just not right, but True.

****No wrongful death charges were made against Bob for the deaths of wives #1, #2, #3 and #4 as they were considered as employees at the time of their dismemberments. As employees' they were awarded severance pay. ■

THE GARDEN DEPARTMENT

Canadian Hemlock

By Richard Murray

BOTANICAL NAME: *Tsuga Canadensis*, “Hussi”

COMMON NAMES: Canadian hemlock, Eastern hemlock

USDA ZONE: 4-7 (down to -30 degrees F)

Tsuga Hussi is a slow growing upright dwarf form of Canadian Hemlock. It has dense, twiggy branches and dense needles. The branches and needles are rather short. It has noticeably bright green new needles, which contrast nicely with the dark green older needles. The new buds are prominent. Untouched, it tends to grow about 3' in 10 years. The plant in the photo is about 15 years old and has been pruned to open it up. The variety was discovered over 100 years ago in Hartford, Connecticut. It was named after its founder John Huss. In spite of the impudent or immoral connotation of the variety's name, it has no connection to the founder's troubled adolescence.

SITE

The plant does well in full sun to mostly shade but does best in some light shade. In hot climates it is mandatory that the plant have afternoon shade.

CULTIVATION

All varieties of hemlocks are difficult to grow in the Bay Area. Local nurseries do not carry them anymore. Even Don Herzog of Miniature Plant Kingdom in Sebastopol had only about 2 remaining hemlock plants. They all say hemlocks in the Bay Area are just too far out of their native range. I planted 5 varieties and a total of 9 plants mostly about 15 years ago. I have lost one so far and two others are not doing well. On the other hand, one is 45 years old and is doing great. They all get afternoon shade. The plant is drought tolerant once established. It is suitable for xeriscaping. It should be planted in well-draining soil, not in dense soil.



USES

It is a popular variety for bonsai due to its short leaves and low, dense branching habit. It is also found in many landscapes where its small evergreen stature has year-round appeal. It works well in rock gardens and fairy gardens. Certainly, it's a great plant for garden railroads. ■



All Steamed Up

by Rob Lenicheck

Rob Lenicheck has been involved in the live steam hobby for about 20 years, modeling in 1:20.3. He has scratchbuilt multiple engines and converted others to his passion: running coal-fired locomotives.

STEAM CALENDAR

- July 13, Saturday Richard Murray's layout
- August 10, Saturday Hiller
- September 21, 22 Los Altos

BAGRS Live Steamers at Ardenwood Railfair 2024

The event dedicated to Railroading of all sizes took place once again this year at Ardenwood Regional Park in Fremont on Memorial Day Weekend. The folks at Ardenwood do an amazing job of organizing the event, getting portable railroads and equipment of all sizes to converge on the park. This year the Railfair occurred on Memorial Day weekend rather than Labor Day weekend. This was a great change to counter the usual sweltering heat of Fremont on Labor Day.

BAGRS has traditionally been a part of the Railfair for many years and it's always been great fun to be included. We set up and run for both Saturday and Sunday of the weekend. The crowds here always show great interest in our trains.

Here Bob Trabucco is readying his engine to run. Bob's engines all run like fine clockwork. From left, Steve Heselton, Jim Hague and Ron Sickler are busying themselves around the layout.



The Park is coming to life as Bob continues his prep work.



Richard Murray is providing some of his usual lighthearted yet unsolicited advice to young Phillip Boles. Phillip and his Dad, Tim, have only been BAGRS members for a few years but have jumped in with both feet.



Steve Heselton always attracts lots of attention when running his Accucraft K-27 which has been converted to coal-firing. People simply can't believe what they're seeing when Steve opens the firebox door. (Now, let's see—where did I leave the marshmallows?)

At Steve's feet you can see the luxurious grass that we got to walk on this year. The former Labor Day scheduling meant that the grass had turned to dirt.



We hope that the young man seen looking at Ron's train grows up to love trains and joins us! You can see that being at eye level means that the kids can reach out and try to touch the engines and rolling stock so a vigilant eye is called for. But some youngsters simply don't want to believe the "don't touch, it's hot" warning and come away with singed fingers. Maybe lesson learned?

Ron Sickler and Colton Snell are discussing the finer details of running their engines. Colton drives down from Roseville to join us!





Ardenwood has a full scale 3' Railroad that is resident at the Park, which is sponsored by the Society for the Preservation of Carter Railroad Resources (SPCRR). And Railfair allows it to shine and provides the public the opportunity to ride behind the narrow gauge train. This year the park had both its diesel electric and a Baldwin 0-4-2 live steamer do the honors.



Finally, Ron waves his hello to the photographer. The BAGRS provides a great opportunity for advertising!

Dave's Corner

by Dave Frediani



Dave Frediani lives in Sonora, California and, among his many talents, constructs 7/8 scale rolling stock.

ACCUCRAFT RUBY GROWS UP

A friend and fellow live steamer from Lockhart, Texas, asked if I would build him a 7/8 scale cab for his 1:20.3 Ruby Locomotive. We emailed back and forth a few times, before I decided on doing the work.

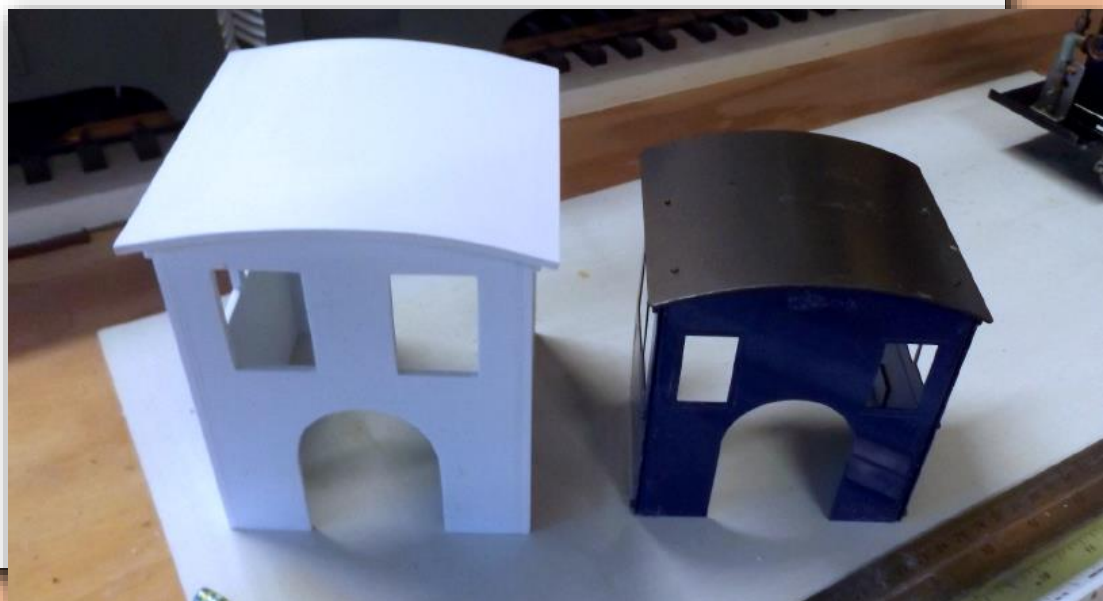
He wanted the cab to be built of 1/8" styrene to match the other 7/8 scale rolling stock that I've built for him in the past. I wasn't sure how the styrene would react to the heat of a live steam engine, so I had to do a few tests before starting this project.

After gluing a few pieces of scrap styrene together and fitting them tightly on my Mimi locomotive, the Mimi has the same measurements as a Ruby Locomotive. I fired my locomotive up for a few test runs. After six good runs, with my locomotive blowing its safety valve on every run, I ran four runs outside and two runs inside on my test rollers. I was a little worried about the heat, but all the runs lasted close to fifteen minutes each with no signs of the styrene burning or melting, "so off to work I go!"

The cab needed to have two windows on each side. For the front I needed two windows, and I wanted to have at least 1/32" of clearance around the boiler, since that's the hottest part of the locomotive.

The back of the cab needed to have an opening large enough to reach all the controls. I also wanted to keep the same curvature of the roof, and last of all, the cab needs to be removable.

Here's the 7/8 scale cab on the left and the stock 1:20.3 cab on the right.



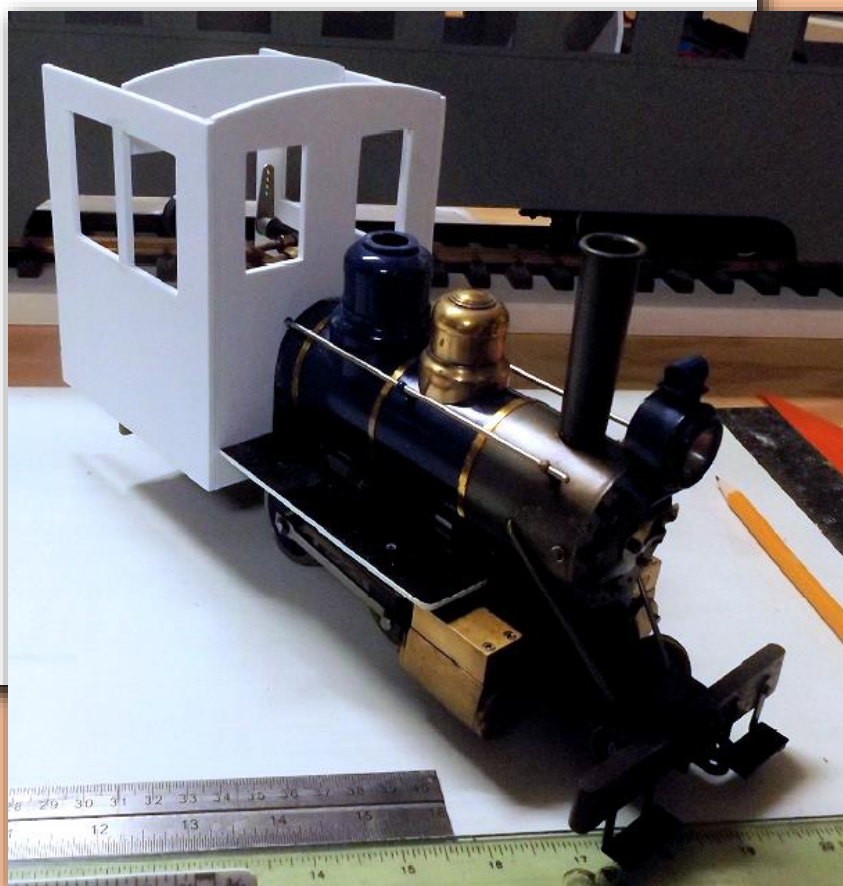


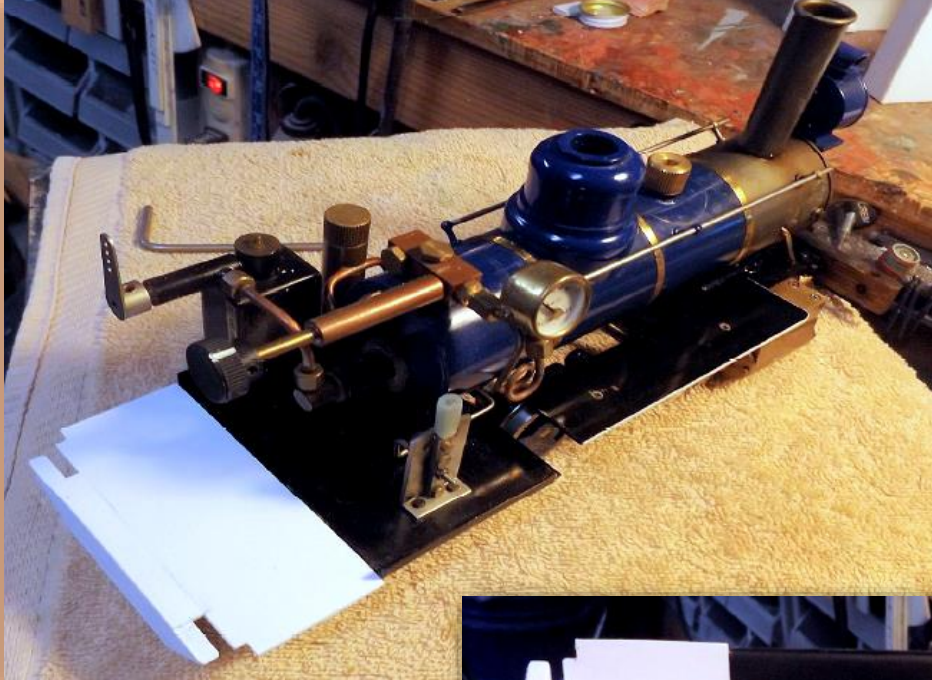
As you can see the cab is longer than the frame, so I needed to extend the frame.

For the work on the cab, I used 1/8" styrene for all four main pieces with #188 Evergreen Styrene strips on all four inside corners, for extra strength. One roof rib was made from 1/8" styrene along with more #188 styrene strips to add more strength and a place for the roof to bond. Next I used Evergreen #296 angle strips to trim the outside corners of the cab. I also used Evergreen #295 angle strips to trim out the windows.

On the roof I used a piece of 1/16" styrene leaving about 1/2" overhang all around the cab, then gluing #158 Evergreen strips to the outside and bottom of the roof. Then trimmed out the roof to meet the #158 strips.

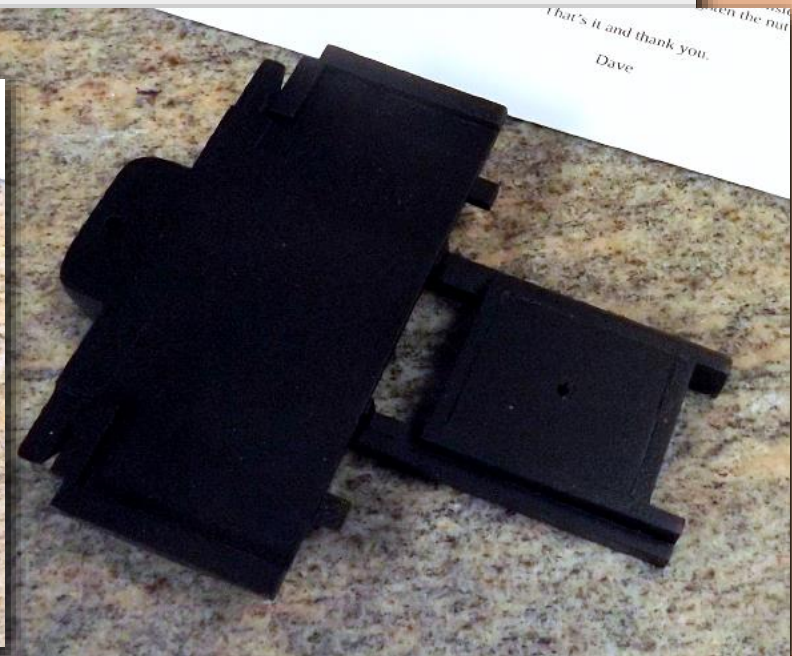
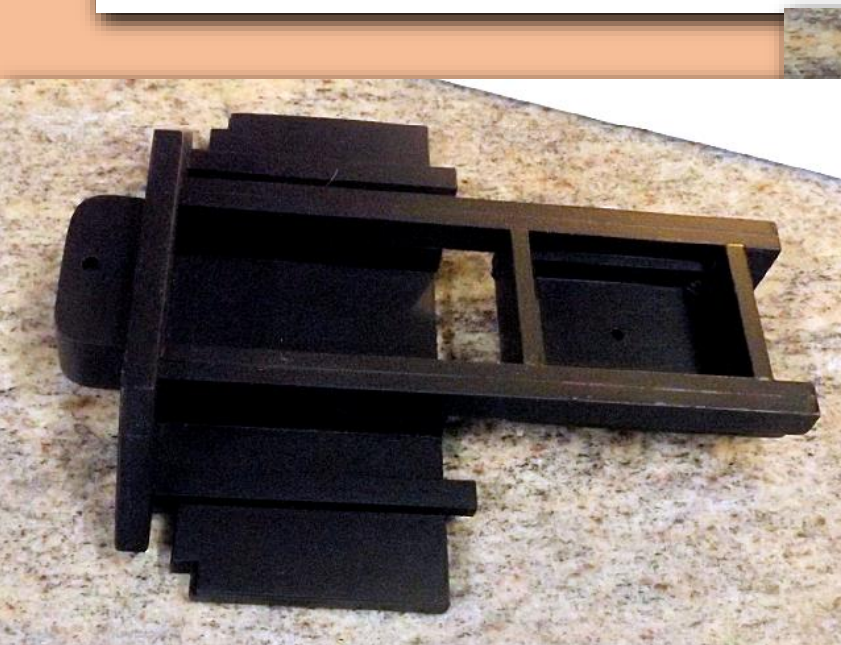
Now it's time to build the extended frame so that the cab has a place to sit, as well as an end beam with a place for a coupler.





Above are top and bottom views of extended frame. The extended frame was built of four #189 Evergreen strips to form two frame rails.

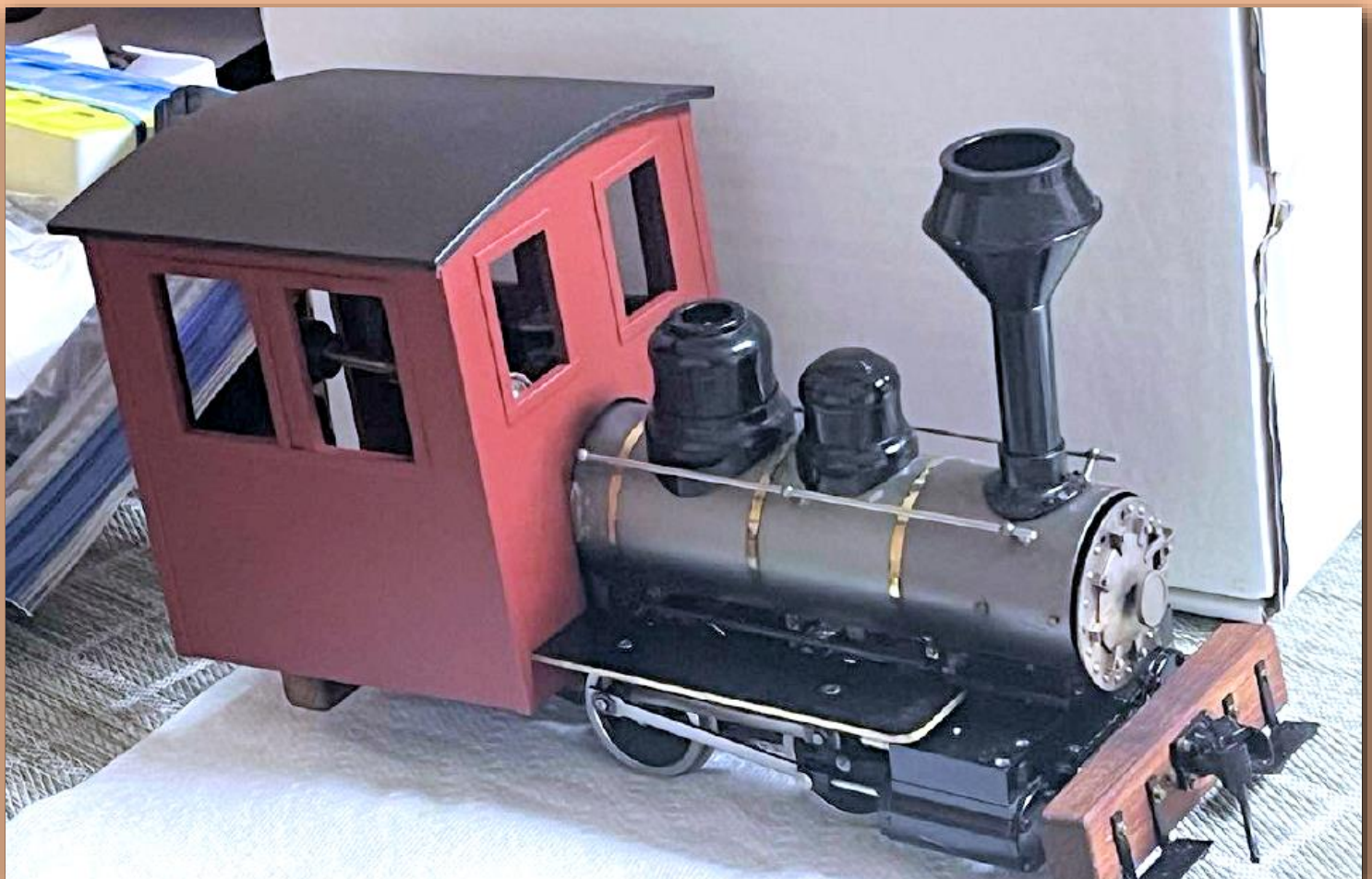
I used a piece of 1/16" styrene to extend the floor of the cab. For the end beam I used #189 and #169 Evergreen strips glued together to form the thickness I wanted for the end beam.





Here are the top and bottom views of finished extended frame, and the front and rear views of the finished cab.

The cab just arrived at it's new home in Texas and sitting on it's new locomotive, without it's new frame under it, the new owner just couldn't wait to see how it looked. Note the 7/8 scale stack from the Train Department. ■



East Devil Hills Modeling Group

by Henner Meinhold

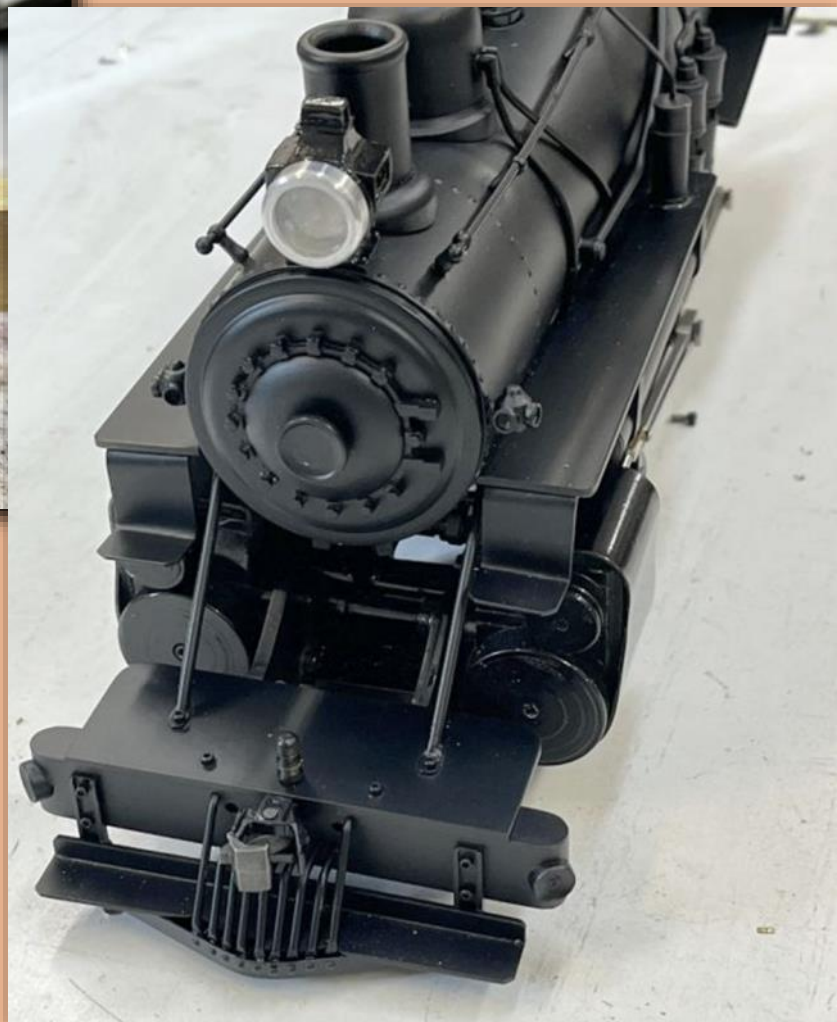


Henner Meinhold resides in Berlin, Germany. The *East Devil Hills Modeling Group* meets regularly to create, collaborate, and share incredibly machined models.

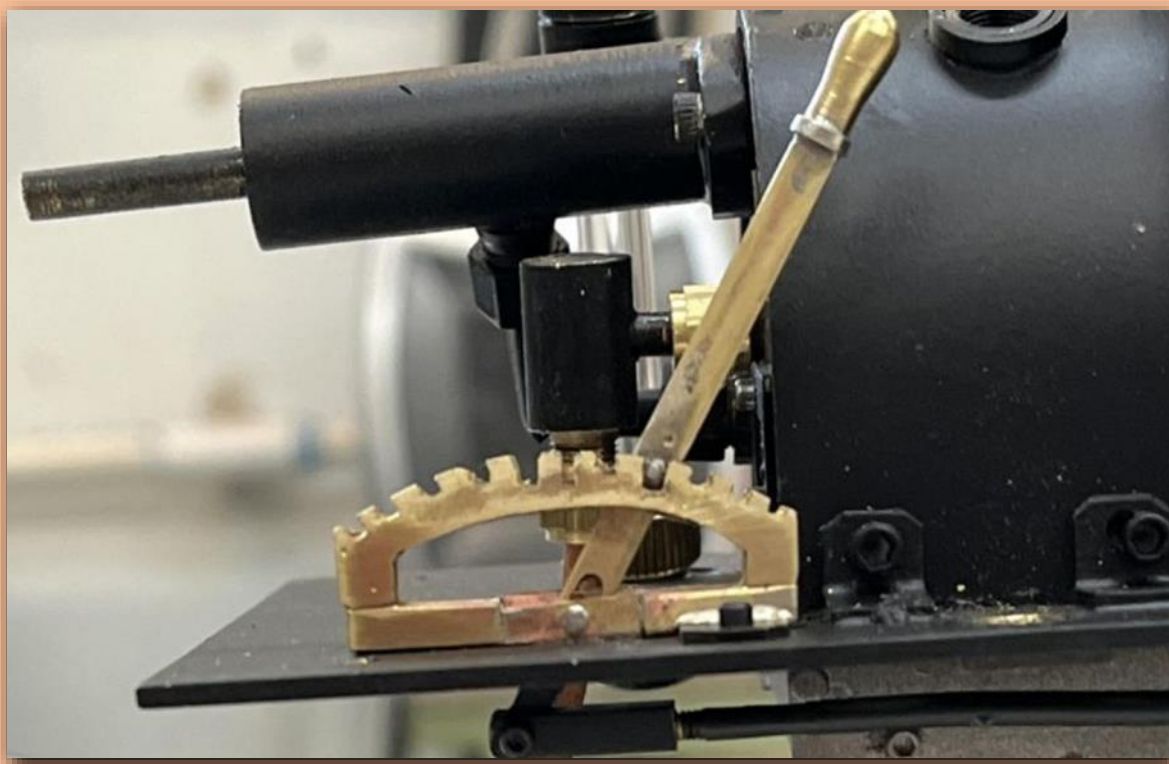
My report this month will be rather short. Only Ron Malouf and Bill Allen sent me progress pictures. Let us start with Ron. He is working on the boiler of his Shay. The complicated T-boiler is almost finished and looks fantastic!



Bill had his NWP build painted and is working on details. This loco has a very unique cow catcher probably made of old fire tubes. The cow catcher painted and attached to the loco. Such a detail defines the face of a loco.



For a Johnson bar Bill ordered a casting and to his dismay, the part was manufactured in one piece. So he had to separate them, which was more work than having it CNC cut from scratch.

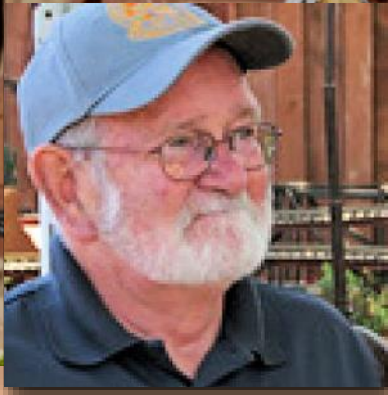


Marc Horovitz is thinking about building a interurban. I did this some years ago, however in H0 scale - Northern Sacramento Combine. A friend of mine started building a diorama around it. Henner ■



Postcards from the Past

By Bill Ralph



Bill Ralph operates the [Porcupine Gulch Railroad](#), and knows a thing or two about amusement parks and postcards.

FENELON PLACE ELEVATOR COMPANY

J.K. Graves had a nice home at the top of the bluffs overlooking the village of Dubuque and a sweeping view of the mighty Mississippi River. Graves was a banker and his office was at the foot of the bluffs just two blocks away, but thirty minutes by horse and buggy. Eager to reduce travel time and be able to go home for lunch and a midday nap, he hired local engineer John Bell to build a private cable car modeled after incline railroads he had seen in Europe.

Grave's original cable car began operation in 1882 out of a wooden building that housed a coal fired steam engine and winch that hauled the car up and down the bluffs on two rails pulled by a hemp rope. Grave's gardener let his boss down in the steep slope in the morning, back up at noon for lunch and a nap, back down again until the end of the work day and back up again. His little private "elevator" system worked fine until an overnight fire two years later destroyed everything.



Fenelon Place Elevator, Dubuque, Iowa

Graves rebuilt his cable car with some improvements and opened it to his neighbors, charging a nickel a ride. When a second fire reduced the elevator to ashes nine years later, ten neighbors banded together forming the Fenelon Place Elevator Company. The group, who had become dependent on the incline short cut, traveled to the Colombian Exposition in Chicago in search of new ideas for their mini 296 foot railway. They returned with an electric streetcar motor, a turnstile, and steel cable, and had a funicular three rail system with two counter balanced cars installed.

C.B. Trewin became sole stockholder of FPEC in 1912 and added some refinements including a second story meeting room to the operator's house. Repair costs for a 1962 electrical fire forced an increase of the cost of a one-way trip to a dime! The Fenelon Place Elevator is still in operation after nearly a century and a half on a hillside in Dubuque, Iowa, thrilling sightseers with views of three states and sweeping views of the Mighty Mississippi. ■

MEMBER UPDATES

From Roger Nicholson: BAGRS member Jim Ralph hosted a General Meeting for the *Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society* at his home in El Dorado, California.



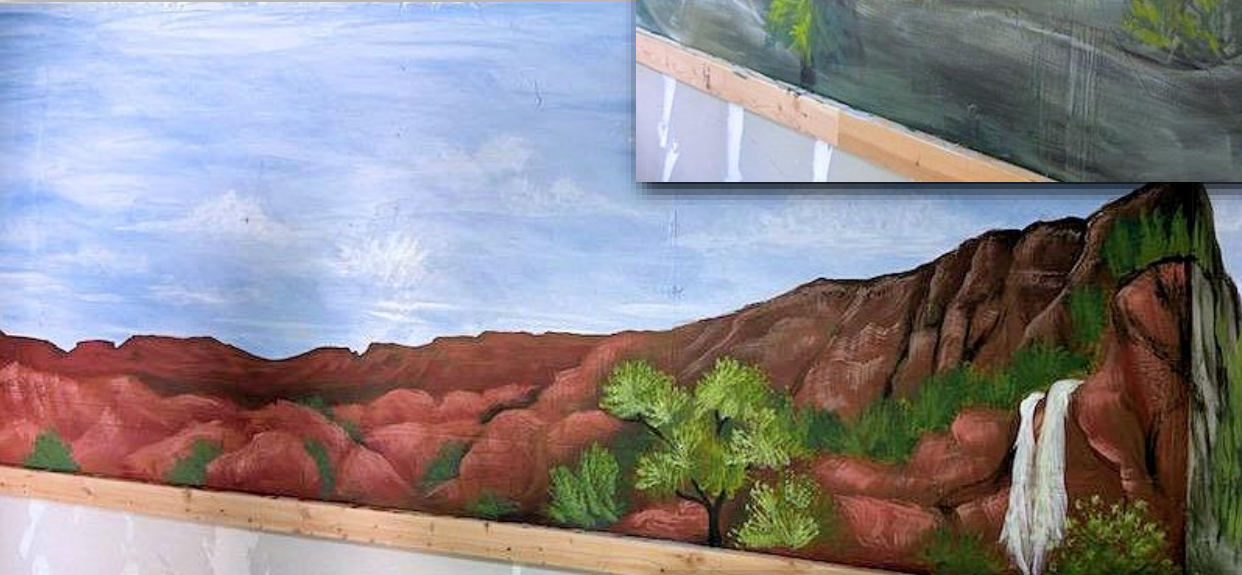
MEMBER UPDATES

Several other BAGRS members were there, including myself, Bill Ralph, and Rich Johnson. We enjoyed viewing Jim's *Carnivale on the Green* railroad, with his extensive collection of Carnivale cars, as well as many of his 3-D printing projects, and his superbly crafted, award winning model structures and boats. Some of these boats were constantly *moving* across the "water"!

Carnival food was served, jokes were shared, and a good time was had by all who attended. ■



MEMBER UPDATES



From Roger Nicholson: Mural painting is in progress for the indoor portion of BAGRS member **Bradley Nicholson's** railroad under construction in St. George, Utah. The murals are being painted by my sister Cyndi. Her work painting scenery for live plays in various venues is in high demand along the Wasatch Front, so we are lucky to have her here.

Once the murals are complete, track installation will begin.

Oh, and every G-scale layout needs dinosaurs

MEMBER BULLETIN BOARD

From Ray Turner: I have been contacted by women who have lost their husbands recently. They are looking to sell their spouse's G scale equipment.

1st was someone who is a detailed F scale modeler (and also larger scales) scratch - building fine scale models. You can see some of his work at: <https://www.cumberlandmodelengineering.com/McDanielGallery.html>

2nd was someone who collected a large amount of LGB (and other) but never built a railroad to run it. The wife at least recognized a Chloe and a Mallet.

If you are serious about possibly acquiring some equipment like that, send me an email about what you are interested in: rayjturner@comcast.net .

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome BAGRS' newest members and invite you to tell us something about yourself. We are happy that you decided to join us, and we hope that you will enjoy getting to know other members.

Remember, you do *not* have to have a garden railroad to participate in the club or have to contribute to BAGRS or the *Trellis & Trestle*—approximately half our members do not have their own railroad. Also, if I get some information wrong or misspell your name, please let me know and I'll take care of it.

If you would like to submit an article, member update, fun train-related thing you saw while traveling, open house you visited, photographs, videos, or have any questions or corrections, please contact me **(Roger Nicholson)** at communications@bagrs.org.

- **Jerry Abreu**, Sacramento, CA. Joined 30 April 2024
- **Chris and Erin Huff**, Danville, CA. Joined 19 June 2024.

GARDEN RAILWAY CLUB NEWS

BAGRS has a policy of reciprocal sharing of newsletters with the following garden railway clubs. We do not share private member information such as home addresses or tour information without the express permission of the particular member. We provide links here to the most recent editions that have been made available to us. For other clubs wishing to obtain a copy of the latest BAGRS *Trellis & Trestle*, please contact **Roger Nicholson** at communications@bagrs.org

[Central California Coast Garden Railway Society—March 2024](#)

[Central Ontario Garden Railway Association—Winter 2024](#)

[Denver Garden Railway Society Newsletter—June 2024](#)

[Gold Coast Garden Railway Society—June 2024](#)

[Puget Sound Garden Railway Society—June 2024](#)

[Redwood Empire Garden Railway Society—June 2024](#)

[Rose City Garden Railway Society—May/June 2024](#)

[Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society—April 2024](#)

[The Garden Whistle New Zealand Large Scale Newsletter—May 2024](#)

[Garden Railroading News—May/June 2024](#)

The 2025 NGRC 2025 will be hosted by the Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society. Website coming soon at ngrc2025.org



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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

NEED A BAGRS NAME BADGE?

Send a \$15 check, payable to BAGRS, for each badge ordered. Be sure to print the Name (s) and City(s) for the badge(s) clearly. Send to: BAGRS Member Badges, 210 Friar Way, Campbell, CA 95008

BAGRS FOR SALE BY MEMBERS

List items you have for sale or items you want. You'll find it in the middle of the "Members Section" menu on our website, bagrs.org. Log in is required.

BAGRS ONLINE PHOTO AND VIDEO LIBRARY

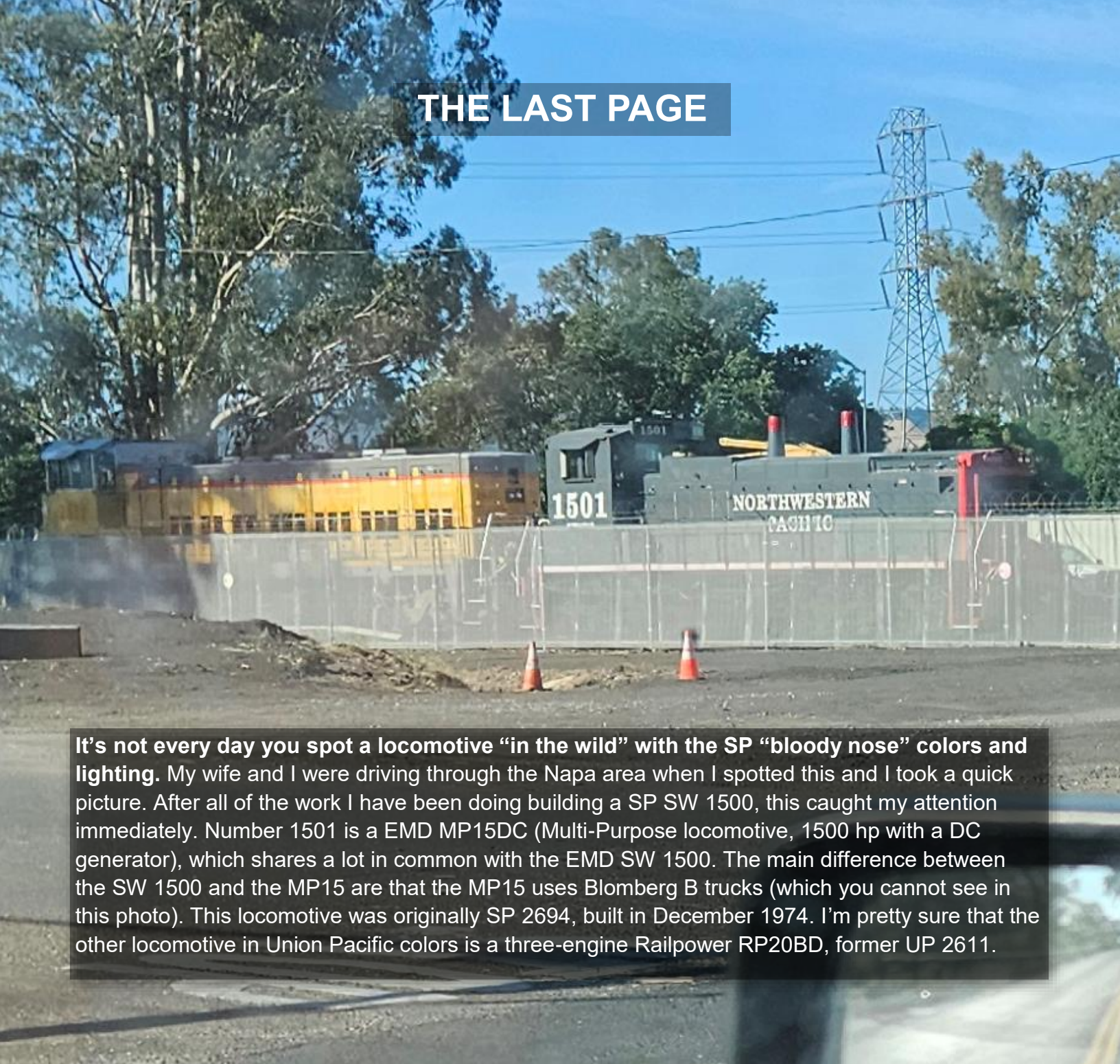
Many photos & videos are hosted at: <https://photos.google.com>

Click on "Go to Google Photos" if offered.

Login with this email and password: BAGRSvideos@gmail.com BestClub4014

The upper-left corner has a pull-down menu to select ALBUMS. Then click on the album of interest.

THE LAST PAGE



It's not every day you spot a locomotive "in the wild" with the SP "bloody nose" colors and lighting. My wife and I were driving through the Napa area when I spotted this and I took a quick picture. After all of the work I have been doing building a SP SW 1500, this caught my attention immediately. Number 1501 is a EMD MP15DC (Multi-Purpose locomotive, 1500 hp with a DC generator), which shares a lot in common with the EMD SW 1500. The main difference between the SW 1500 and the MP15 are that the MP15 uses Blomberg B trucks (which you cannot see in this photo). This locomotive was originally SP 2694, built in December 1974. I'm pretty sure that the other locomotive in Union Pacific colors is a three-engine Railpower RP20BD, former UP 2611.

TRELLIS AND TRESTLE

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