



Upcoming Meets:

February 16 11AM
Jim and Sylvia
Eldridge
513 N. Keystone St.
Burbank
(818) 954-9809

Please bring:

A-G Desserts
H-O Appetizers
P-Z Salads

Upcoming Meets:

March 8 – McClain
April 5 – Olmstead
clinic meet, see pg. 5
April 26 – Morgan
May 17 – Raymond
May 24 - Hahn
June – Waterman
July – Sal Mele
August - Sylvester
September - Beaver
October – Arseneault
and Lyans

Directions and map deleted from
on line edition

February 2008

Regular Meet:

This month we will meet at the home of Jim and Sylvia Eldridge. Note that really stormy weather cancels, so call if it looks really bad. If it's just liquid sunshine, Jim has a cover that we can shelter under.

This has always been one of the best layouts in the club, and Jim and Sylvia somehow find a way to keep on improving it. This year they have added a siding to set up trains, and a small building or two.

The layout has about 150 feet of main line, with 4 foot radius curves. The side clearances will permit even a K-27 to run, while the overhead clearance at the bridge has been raised by $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.

Jim would like to have a swap meet as well, if the weather is reasonable. So, bring some of that stuff you no longer love and find a new home for it with someone who will love it. If you bring something, you will need to bring a table for it.

Jim promises that it will run that new Bachmann K-27 that you got for Christmas, so bring it along. Bring some cars, too and we'll try double- triple- or ??- heading them.

Jim said that the meet will continue until the moon comes up; but I suspect he said that before discovering that the moon will rise at 1:01 PM that day.

The 1:32 Group Meet:

The 1:32 Group's February meet is also on the 16th. It will be at Gary and Marilyn Siegel's again.

You need to RSVP to Gary a couple weeks ahead of time if you want to bring something to run, as all the moves will be scheduled in advance. You don't need to RSVP if you just want to watch. In either case, you will have to provide for your own lunch.

The day of liberation is here

I'm sure that there are one or two people who have been looking forward to the day that the GCGRS newsletter no longer clutters their mailbox. For them, that day has arrived. But if you are reading this, then chances are that doesn't describe you. So, if the address label on the last page says 2007, you will never hear from us again unless you send \$20 to Bruce Kuebler at the address on the back page by the end of February.

San-Val Trains is closing

Al Kramer, president of San-Val Trains, has decided to go do something else, and is closing the doors. If they aren't already closed by the time you read this, they will be soon. A few of us had a field trip on January 12th, and it was pretty well picked over even then. If you haven't been by now, it's probably too late.

Leaving on Track 9 ¼:

Mike McClain and Sharon Conte are moving to Tennessee to start a new career. Jim Eldridge volunteered his daughter-in-law, De Eldridge to take over when Mike leaves.

I want to take this opportunity to say that I really appreciate all the work that Mike did to make our web site a place that was worth a visit, or even two.

I wonder what Mike is going to do with the 100 dwarf Alberta spruce trees that he put so much effort into planting only last year.

And, yes, I do know it's supposed to be "Track 9 ¾" but some people just have to do things their own way.

New Arrivals:

Don and Joyce Margolin:

Please join me in welcoming Don and Joyce Margolin of Santa Barbara. I have to apologize to Don and Joyce, they actually joined last November, but their data somehow got lost in the ether, and I only met Don at the last meet where he complained about not getting any bulletins.

More New Arrivals:

Richard Hanson and Socorro Lopez-Hanson:

Also please welcome Richard Hanson and Socorro Lopez Hanson of Camarillo. Richard has been interested in trains since his HO and Lionel days as a kid. Richard got back into it after buying some Thomas stuff for his grandson, and then found us on the Internet.

They have taken the most important step toward building a layout: they have a name for it. It will be the Bijou-Lake Valley RR. The name comes from a logging railroad that Richard's uncle owned near Lake Tahoe. I don't think that Richard will be modeling his uncle's motive power: draft animals. The real B-LP never used a locomotive. Aside from the name, it is rather more of a work in progress than most of ours.

Not a new arrival, but getting more into it: Seth Olitzky

Seth Olitzky is not a new member, but he has decided that the rest of us are having too much fun, so he is starting a layout. He mentioned that he would like some help in the planning stage, so if you have some sage advice for Seth, you can call him at (805) 695-0559.

Christmas Doldrums:

I circulated an email to find out what sort of train goodies people got for Christmas. I was figuring on running a full page extravaganza of locomotives, cars, buildings, and you name it.

Folks, let me tell you, the response was anemic enough to almost completely explain the present economic downturn. The talking heads on TV say it's because of the sub-prime mortgage mess, but I think it's because so few of us are acquiring new train goodies. Of all the people I talked to, there were four positive responses. John Lyans and John Albin both got the new Bachmann K-27; Paul Jennings got the Coca-Cola Christmas box car, and Steve Vendt is going to get an Eagle Wings steel building. That was it. If anybody else got more than a calendar, I didn't hear about it.

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Newsletter:

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1:32 Newsletter:
Bruce Kuebler

Membership:

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Webmaster:

Mike McClain
mike AT mtmii.com
for now, anyway.

Please put "GCGRS"
in the subject line of
any correspondence.

Meets: Beaver (805) 967-2552

The Gold Coast
Garden Railroad
Newsletter is published
monthly. Membership
in our society is open to
anyone at the pleasure
or whim of the
members at large.

Next month:

The March bulletin will be
mailed about February
21st.

It will have a new
roster, so if you want to
be on it, please renew by
February 17th.

Larry and Bonnie Lowenberg's Post-Christmas Meet

"It could always be said of Ebenezer Scrooge that he knew how to keep Christmas well..." I think ol' Scrooge probably could have taken some lessons from Larry and Bonnie. Not only do they have way more Christmas trains than any normal person, they also have a talking, dancing Santa statue, almost a dozen Christmas theme jigsaw puzzles that were converted to pictures on the walls, and other stuff too numerous to mention.

We expected the worst weather, but it was just about perfect. It had rained most of the night, and threatened more all day, but it never rained a drop on us. Larry and Bonnie must

have the same connections to the weatherman as the Rose Parade folks.

All the indoor pictures are of Larry's Bachmann locomotives, including the Columbia saddle tanker, the apple green Ten Wheeler, and the 0-4-0. All of the diesels running outside were also Larry's.

The outdoor layout sits in a planter box that is about 10 feet wide, and 25 feet long.

John Lyans and John Albin brought their latest acquisitions: a pair of Bachmann K-27s. John Lyans has the 455 in green livery, and John Albin has the 453 with dog

Albin hadn't taken his out of the box; and John Lyans had never run his. They look gorgeous, and run extremely well, including at slow speeds. Unfortunately, slow speeds was about all they could do here, as the clearances were ultra tight, and one tree was just too close to the track.

John Power brought his Rio Grande Southern Goose #2. I've seen this one before, but had never realized how realistic the sound is. It sounded even better than it looked, which is going some.

Thanks to John Albin for sending some pictures, and thanks to Larry and Bonnie for another memorable meet.





Continued from page 2

I think it's up to us to rescue the economy. We should all go out and buy that dream locomotive that we have been putting off for whatever reason.

Personally, I have been dreaming about an Aster live steam H-8 Allegheny 2-6-6-6. It models the most powerful steam locomotive ever built. In real life, the Chesapeake & Ohio used them to haul coal out of the mountains of West Virginia. A prototypical train was **two** H-8s and 140 seventy ton hoppers of coal making a train nearly two miles long and weighing 10,000 tons.

If you've seen my layout, clearly that doesn't work, so I will need to tear out my layout, and build a brand new, much larger one. I think that there will be just enough room if I tear down the house.

As to where we'll live, well, heck, the firebox of the prototype was big enough for a sit-down dinner for 12. At 1:32, the Aster version would be cozier, but there is that big cab as well. Just think: a big screen TV would be an inch and a half wide. There'd certainly be plenty of hot water. Speaking of hot water, I suspect I will have plenty when Jane reads this.

Guess I'd better get back on track before any of our new members start asking "Who is this guy, and who's in charge of his meds?" and decide they want their money back.

Paul Jennings

Paul Jennings, our member in Peterborough, UK, wrote to say that he had to work on Christmas Day, if you can call driving a steam locomotive work. He sent this picture, taken on Christmas Day, but I'm not sure if Paul was driving the train, or taking the picture. It's on the Nene Valley Ry, where Paul volunteers regularly.



This engine is the King Haakon, a Swedish-built 2-6-0 engine dating from 1919. Paul describes it as light footed but says that it steams well, and is a reliable performer.

I'm not sure how many people rode the Nene Valley over the holidays, but Paul was expecting around 20,000. To put that in perspective, the Nene Valley hauls nearly half as many people in fewer than a dozen operating days in the Thanksgiving-Christmas time as the Cumbres and Toltec hauls in 140+ operating days spread over the whole year.

Bob Cage

Bob Cage, our member in Bentonville, Arkansas, wrote to say that he had put on a bridge building clinic at one of the meets for the North West Arkansas Garden Railway Society (NWAGRS). Bob created a kit and plans for a king post bridge. King post bridges were very short, all wood bridges that looked sort of like the letter 'A' from the side. Today's short bridges are steel girder bridges.

Several of the NWAGRS members spent an afternoon building their own bridge and got to take it home. That sounded like a lot of fun to me, especially since it was pouring rain when I read his message. That got me to thinking about ideas for a rainy day meet for us; and what we might be able to put together for and from our members.

A Clinic Meet:

I can't really replicate what Bob did, especially since they spent the afternoon in his workshop, and my shop is 6 feet by 8. But that didn't stop me. We can do something else.

I am planning a clinic meet on April 5. The format is currently in a state of flux, which is a polite way to say that I haven't any idea of what will, or won't happen.

Some ideas that have been put forward include weathering, figures, bird-house-to-cabin bashes, tunnel portals from Styrofoam, and short bridges. And this is after only two days of discussions. It's apparent that there is a lot of interest for this sort of thing, but it needs a lot of development first. I want to be able to run this even if it rains, so there won't be any mountain building, or anything that must be outside. I know that rain isn't usually a concern in the first week of April, but we've had so much rain this year that I don't want to chance it.

My first idea was that we could have four or five of these in one afternoon, but after a long telephone call with Bob, I don't think that is realistic. I am now thinking about probably two longer sessions.

I am bringing this all up because I want to get as many opinions as possible at the Eldridge's meet, if not before. See you there, or call or write and tell me your ideas.

GCGRS Membership Application Form

Membership in the Gold Coast Garden Railway Society is open to anyone who is interested in outdoor model railroading. Dues are \$20 per year. New members, please add \$6 for each name tag that you want to have. Membership runs from January to December. Make checks payable to "Bruce Kuebler". You can put GCGRS on the memo line.

Bring this application to any meet, or mail it to:

Bruce Kuebler
10908 Encino Dr
Oak View CA 93022-9238

First Name _____ Spouse/Partner/Other(SPO): _____

Last Name: _____ SPO Last Name, if different: _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ email address: _____

Status of your layout (check one): ___ Someday, ___ Serious planning stage, ___ Construction, ___ Barely operational, ___ Marginally OK ___ Not good enough for a meet, ___ Pretty good, if you don't look too closely

Would you like some advice/help from someone in the club? ___ Yes ___ No

If Yes, what would you like help with first?

If you have an operating layout, tell us a bit about it.

The name of your railroad: _____

The sharpest curve is _____ feet radius. The steepest grade is _____ %

Gold Coast Garden Railway Society
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