



Garden Railroading News

Garden Railroading eNewsletter Fall Sept/Oct 2020

Advertisements included in this issue come from members of Western clubs.

Download, then read this eNewsletter in Acrobat Reader to activate links to online videos.

Welcome to this example *Garden Railroading eNewsletter* conceived by West Coast garden railroad clubs to widely share information!

Going forward, editions of this free newsletter would contain inspiring articles from garden railroad societies across the USA, Canada and beyond; articles designed to share:

- Innovative approaches to every aspect of garden railroading
- Solutions to common problems
- New products & services
- Notices of conventions, train shows & public displays
- Where to get all the 'stuff' we need

The goals are to inspire existing garden railroaders, encourage people to join our hobby, give our vendors an economic way to reach us after the demise of *Garden Railways*, and to keep our amazing hobby on track.

We are at an early stage. Your feedback and suggestions are welcome.

Read page 41 to learn more about this publication, its distribution model, and a possible website/FaceBook page.

In This Issue

View from the Cab: Tortoise & Lizard Bash Railroad New Trestle by Todd Brody	3	How and Why I Built Turnout Indicators by Ron Cole	20
Article from: Orange County Garden Railway Society Golden Spike Gazette July 2020		Article from: Puget Sound Garden Railway Society Garden Railroading July 2020	
A Look Back: The Deadwood & Dry Gulch Railroad by Carla Brand Breitner	7	Backyard Basics: Including a "Setting Up a Garden Railroad" Website Link by Jim Garcia	24
Article from: Santa Clarita Valley Garden Railroad Club Newsletter June/July 2020		Article from: Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society Valley Flyer July 2020	
I've Been Working on the Railroad: Hey Carl, All She Needs Is a Bell and a Boiler Check by Bruce McKinney	8	COVID-19 Activities: Building Mountains by Suzy & Jeff Namba	24
Article from: Rose City Garden Railway Society Newsletter August 2020		Article from: Sacramento Valley Garden Railway Society Valley Flyer July 2020	
I've Been Working on the Railroad: Porter with Backwoods Tender – Complete by Bruce McKinney	9	Weathering: From Toy to Model in a Few Easy Steps by Bob Frein	26
Article from: Rose City Garden Railway Society Newsletter August 2020		Article from: Santa Clarita Valley Garden Railroad Club Newsletter August 2020	
Featured Layout: The Lone Pine & Western RR– My Garden Railroading Journey by Tom Gaps	11	Member Projects: Mr. Haney's Traveling Emporium on the Silverton Northern Railroad by Chuck Klein	29
Member of Rose City Garden Railway Society since 2008		Article from: San Diego Garden Railway Society News July 2020	
Plant of the Month: Dwarf Colorado Blue Spruce by Richard Murray	18	Mail-Order Nurseries: A Plant Source for Garden Railways by Don Herzog	33
Article from: Bay Area Garden Railway Society Trellis & Trestle August 2020		Article from: Redwood Empire Garden Railway Society The Redwood Tie July 2020	
Member Updates: The Neu Zillertalbahn Garden Railroad by Chris & Noëlla Simmons	19	Straight from the Iron Horse's Mouth: Letters to the Editor & Answers from our Authors	39
Article from: Bay Area Garden Railway Society Trellis & Trestle August 2020		An Open Letter to the Garden Railroading Community by Bill Derville	41
Member Updates: Ceramic Burner in a Roadster by Dave Frediani	19	Regional Information Greater Los Angeles Area: For more information about Model Railroading in Southern California.	42
Article from: Bay Area Garden Railway Society Trellis & Trestle August 2020			

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Layout Design & Editor Carla Brand Breitner

Comments on this eNewsletter should be sent to:

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Editor@GRNews.org

View from the Cab : By Todd Brody

The weather has been beautiful. It's way too nice to stay indoors and now is the perfect time to whip that garden railroad into shape. I first take care of the garden before getting to the railroad. This is because, unlike the track, which weathers very slowly, plant growth goes on at a rapid pace and is greatly accelerated during the spring and summer. Without regular maintenance, the trees lose their shapes and the thyme grows over (and under) the track. Oh..., and there may also be a couple weeds thrown in the mix just for good measure. Neglect the garden now, and pay the consequences later!

With the garden basically out of the way..., for the moment, I could get down to the installation of the new acrylic trestle. The old trestle was made of redwood that an old Club member had ripped for me on his table saw. That trestle had been in place for about 16 years (since ~2004), replacing the original trestle that was made of balsa wood! Believe it or not, that balsa trestle lasted for 7 years outside..., or maybe it was just the paint on the wood that lasted all that time.

The new bents are made of 3/8" thick smoked acrylic cut on a laser cutter. I designed this trestle to be assembled using stainless steel screws and nuts. The lateral braces are a "friction fit" with the bent braces holding them in position. Because no glue is used and there is a certain amount of free play, the bents can be adjusted on the piers and should be able to better withstand crosswinds allowing them to be repositioned. In the past, the glue joints on the wooden bents would just let go or the wood would snap and I would need to re-glue these after major wind events. I've also fixed the approach from Feather Mountain, but still need to complete the approach the from the Horseshoe Curve side.

Thanks,

Todd Brody,

Vice President, Orange County GRS
Orange County, California

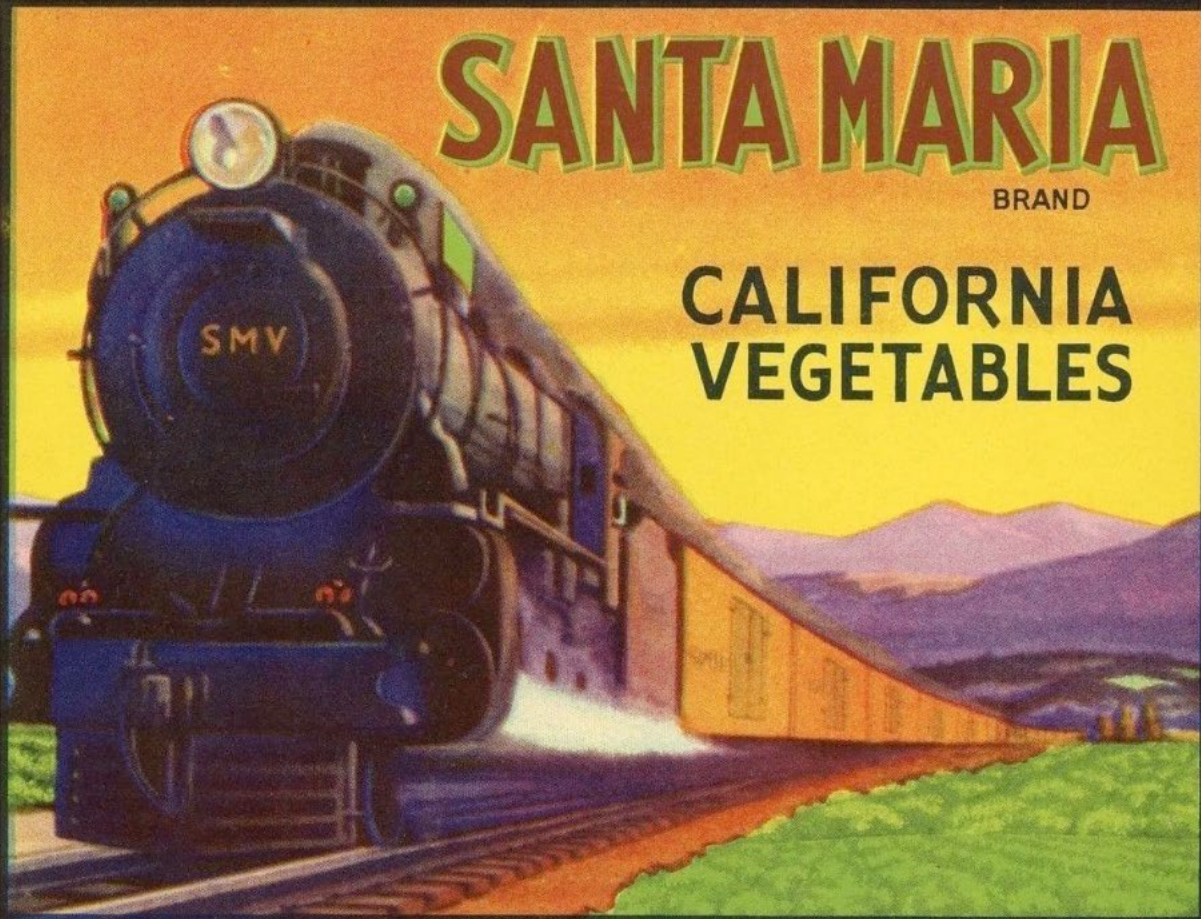
TORTOISE & LIZARD BASH RAILROAD NEW TRESTLE







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The Deadwood & Dry Gulch Railroad

A Look Back: Dan & Debbie Goetz's Deadwood & Dry Gulch Railroad

By Carla Brand Breitner

The Deadwood & Dry Gulch Railroad filled a 30-inch high planter spanning 125 feet along the back patio of the Goetz's house in Castaic. Two mainlines separated by a 14-inch grade ran past mining in the mountains to a logging lake overlooking Hasley Canyon. Multiple miniature trees and plantings accented the layout. Scratch-built or modified kit buildings with "people" at work or at rest completed the detailed tableaux. These photos are from a 2009 open house.



The mountain end of the railroad looped back on a long trestle bridge. Farms and sidings could be found along the rails.



A railcar point-to-point served the citizens of Deadwood.



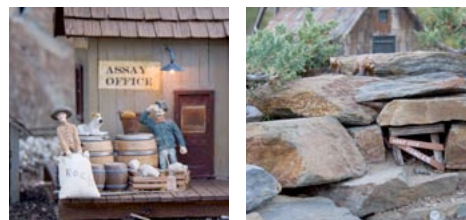
A river flows alongside the low line under high line bridges.



A forest fills one end of the railroad, Deadwood sits in the center, and a silver mine (little brown square) sits on a mountain at the far end.



Buildings featured signage and lighting; people at work and animals at play could be found throughout.





I've Been Working on the Railroad...

8

HEY CARL, ALL SHE NEEDS IS A BELL AND A BOILER CHECK

Bruce McKinney

Had this Bachmann Saddle Tank loco....was going to offer it for sale on e-Bay - until I found out she

was DOA - so, decided to turn her into one of my "famous" diorama's - or vignette - which ever you prefer... I usually title my WW2 diorama's and this one is no different - call this. "HEY CARL, ALL SHE NEEDS IS A BELL AND A BOILER CHECK"



"HEY CARL, I THINK ALL SHE NEEDS IS A BELL AND A BOILER CHECK"



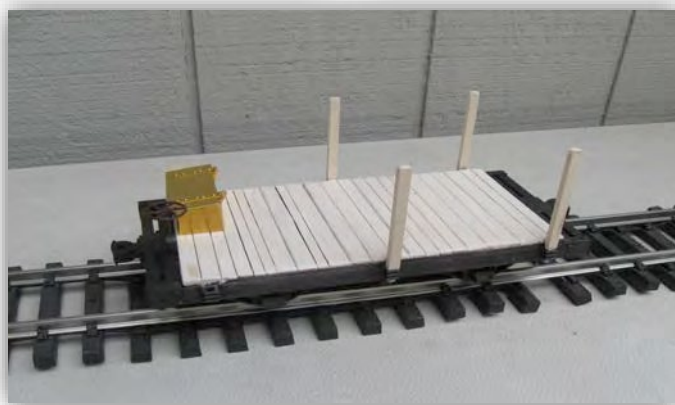
Rose City Garden Railway Society

Portland, Oregon

www.rcgrs.com



Porter with backwoods tender - complete



The wood looks so realistic because it is real wood. Took a small diameter branch from a Doug Fir - cut into roughly 1" lengths, then split with a wood chisel. It's easy to do and results in the most realistic wood - because it is..... The water tank is a PVC joiner - Home Depot - all of 49 cents - if that. The ends were capped with styrene - square fill box also made from styrene. The hatch is from a box of spares I have - its actually a tank entry hatch. Thin styrene straps around the ends. The rivets I ordered from England off e-Bay from a company that makes tiny round-headed rivets for miniature boilers. I used this product on the back head of the

Porter engine as well. I got three different sizes - pretty cheap altogether. The "rough texture" on the tank was created by liberally dabbing on Mod Podge (a sticky glue - comes in a fairly large plastic bottle from Michaels), let it dry - then weather it - gives a nice texture to an otherwise slick smooth surface. I also have used it on the sand and steam domes on my weathered Shays as the real deal domes appear to be cast in metal and have a rough surface.

Bruce McKinney





AL97-395 Big Boy #4018

G-scale Models of the Big Boy 4-8-8-4 locomotive were manufactured by Accucraft, MTH RailKing and USA Trains.



On January 26, 2014, Big Boy 4014 started its journey to Wyoming to be returned to service. In 2019, 4014 toured the country as a Union Pacific Steam ambassador.

Visit Big Boy #4014 when it returns to Pomona, California, for the 100th Anniversary of the Los Angeles County Fair in September 2022

My Garden Railroading Journey

By Tom Gaps

Member, Rose City Garden Railway Society



**Rose City
Garden Railway Society**
Portland, Oregon

A friend recently asked me, "How did you decide on garden railroading as a hobby." I had to think about it for a while because gardening is NOT my thing. As a young child, I had a Lionel O-27 in the attic that my father built for me – basically an oval with some sidings. As a teen I was "allowed" a large section of the basement for an HO layout but never made it as far as putting up scenery before I left for the Navy. When I was first married, I was "allowed" a small section of the family room for an "N" scale layout but again, that never made it to the scenery before the family/hobby room became my son's "play" room. Thinking back, I guess it was the mechanical/electrical engineer in me that loved the building of the railroad, but not the detail work involved in the "modeling" or the creation of scenery. With garden railroading, Mother Nature creates the scenery for you and along the way she also creates the mechanical engineering challenges, the two parts I enjoy the most.

I first encountered garden railroading about 2000 or 2001 when I started attending the annual Garden Summer Tours. *[Rose City Garden Railway Society organizes a yearly weekend of layout tours for the public advertised through a booklet available in hobby shops and garden centers. – Ed.]* Those first few years of attend-



ing Summer Tour, I would look at the layouts and think, "I wish I had a backyard in which a garden railroad could be built, but, alas, I have a flat, boring yard." Then one day, while visiting David Kookan's railroad during Summer Tour, about 2006, I overheard him telling a visitor about how he had several loads of dirt delivered to build up his railroad in his "flat" backyard. Suddenly a light bulb turned on. "I can do that! Why not! *Then* I would have a backyard into which to build a challenging railroad." I started thinking about scenes I would like to see from the kitchen window, from the bedroom window, from the back deck, etc. The engineering challenge then became "How do I connect these scenes in a reasonable and logical way?"



Above: The "flat, boring backyard" that would become the Lone Pine & Western Railroad, shown below.



I was planning to retire in 2009 and a garden railroad would be something to keep me busy in my retirement years. Little did I know what I was getting myself into.

I joined the RCGRS in 2008 so that I could learn more about the hobby. I listened to discussions during meetings, asked lots of (sometimes "stupid") questions, did a lot of reading and looking at what others had done. We had visited the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and the Durango & Silverton Railroad several times between 2001 and 2004. These visits helped me decide that I wanted my railroad to (sort of) model Colorado Narrow Gauge from the late 1800's to the early 1900's. That meant that 1:20.3 would be my scale of choice. Since Code-250 rail presented the best prototypical ratio of height to width for 1:20.3 scale, Code-250 became my rail of choice. The patina color that brass rail develops over time looks the most authentic to me, so brass rail became my rail of choice. I obtained some samples from several vendors and settled on Sunset Valley to be my supplier of choice.

After joining RCGRS in 2008, I thought about what to include in my railroad, and the more I thought about it, the bigger my plans got. In July of 2009, I officially retired from Intel which meant that I now had a lot of free time on my hands. (Boy, that didn't last long.) I purchased some large sheets of graph paper and started putting my ideas to paper. By then I "sort of" knew what scenes I wanted, but not yet how I would connect them together to form a railroad.

To help me in this process, I wrote two lists. The first list had my goals, all of the things I hoped to include in my railroad. I knew that it was likely that I would not be able to include all of them, but I hoped to include as many as possible.

The second list consisted of rules for the design. These were hard and fast rules that any successful plan would have to meet. Rules like:

No grade shall exceed 4%.

Any grade of 3% to 4% must not extend for more than 10 feet and must be preceded and followed by a least 20 foot of less than 2% grade.

Any grade of 2% to 3% must not extend for more than 20 feet.

The average grade for the entire railroad must be less than 1.5%.

Every location in every tunnel needed to be accessible from no more than 3 feet away. (That meant that tunnels of up to 6 feet could be accessed from either end but tunnels of greater than 6 feet in length would need to have access ports at no more than 6 foot intervals.)

One goal was that all curves be of 6 foot radius or greater, but a rule was that no curve shall have a radius of less than 5½ feet and any curve of less than 6 foot radius must be of less than 45 degrees of curvature. The final track plan must include at least 80 percent of the items on the "goals" list.

My first three attempts at drawing a track plan meeting at least 80 percent of my goals resulted in a violation of one or more of my rules. Finally, on the



Photo by Carla Brand Bretnier



Photo by Carla Brand Bretnier

Above: The solution to long tunnels were access hatches built into the retaining wall.

Below left: Curves and grades under construction. Below right: Tunnels and curves on the lower and upper mainlines.



Photo by Carla Brand Bretnier

fourth attempt, I had a plan that passed all rules and included well above 80 percent of my goals. With that basic plan in place, I set to drawing multiple cross section views.

I knew that my railroad would be a major undertaking—one that would tax my physical ability to complete in a reasonable time without killing myself in the process, so I took my plans to a landscape contractor with whom I was familiar. This contractor had the three things I lacked: a) experience at landscape work; b) the necessary heavy equipment to make the job easier; and most of all c) youth on their payroll. After much negotiating, they gave me a quote for the work. Construction started the first week of July, 2010, and ALL work was completed by April of 2011. In all, it totaled about 1,500 man hours of work, with some “estimated” 200 of those hours being my labor to lay track. I was now ready to participate in Summer Tour as a host.

Our first year as part of the Summer Tour was 2011, with a working railroad but not much else. The plants were all small and had a long way to go before they would grow into the space set aside for them. The rights-of-way were all pristine clean, unlike the overgrown, backwoods railroad I have today. But most of all, there were no structures, no buildings, no sign of life; just tracks, locomotives and rolling stock. It was at that point that I encountered my first major road block; I discovered that there were few, if any, vendors who supplied ready to go (or maybe kits) for 1:20.3 structures. Ouch. What to do – What to do!!!

It quickly became apparent that I would need to learn to build my own 1:20.3 structures. I had no structure building experience and zero idea how to even start. Luckily for me, we had a club member, Gary Lee, who held annual structure building clinics. I signed up for one of these clinics and felt totally lost, but I learned a great deal and, after two days of work, I walked away from the clinic with an almost complete model of a speeder storage shed, which I later completed at home. I attended several of these clinics, each time learning something new. All told, I built a total of four structures at these annual clinics – a speeder shed, a gallows turntable, a sanding house for locomotives and a couple of water tanks.

While I was not an expert by any means, these clinics gave me the confidence to branch out to building structures on my own.

At first I started with kits that included the plans and all of the pre-cut pieces. From this I moved on to working from simple plans and a pile of scale lumber purchased from a supplier. I started cutting my own scale lumber when I was unwilling to wait for a vendor delivery.

This led to drawing my own plans based on pictures of buildings I found on the web. Then I tried combining various buildings, i.e. the building front in that picture combined with the building side in this picture. Finally—I can't find a picture of what I want nor can I find any plans, so—here we go, just wing it, design it the way you think a building for this particu-



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner

(Above) Summit Depot sits over Halfway Junction. (Below)



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner



Photo by Gary Lee

Tom with sanding house at Gary Lee's clinic.



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner

Sanding house next to coal tower.



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner

Right: Scale lumber storage..

lar purpose would be built and build it the way “you” think it should be built.

This has resulted in unique buildings that no one else has, because the original building exists only in my head. It has resulted in buildings built from scratch, just wood and glue. No purchased pieces, no purchased windows or doors. These are buildings about which I can say, “I built that, on my own, with no help.” They are by no means models. They are not “exact” copies of some real world structure.

Since these buildings sit outdoors from early May to late September, exposed to whatever Mother Nature sends in the way of weather, I never worry about including fine detail, because I know it would not last when left to Mother Nature’s punishment. These buildings simply “suggest” to the viewer what they would expect to see and their imagination fills in the rest. But most importantly of all, I love building them. The challenge of “How to make this work” provides great satisfaction when I finally figure it out. When I built the coal tippie, I didn’t start out intending for it to actually work but as it turned out, the lift buckets actually would lift coal (quarter minus gravel), dump it into the tippie at the top and later discharge it down the chute to a locomotive tender. Sad to say, Mother Nature has altered the close tolerances needed to make it work, but it still “looks” good.

Along the way there were lessons to be learned as I tried different techniques and ways to do things, some of which worked and others that ended up just “lessons learned.” One of my early projects was a two-stall engine house. In hindsight, it was probably a little on the large side and I will try to avoid building another structure quite that big. I define BIG as a structure that requires two people to carry it. I built a very tall coaling tower, but I can easily carry it from its winter storage out to the railroad each spring and back to winter storage in the fall. I need to find a second set of hands to help me carry the engine house.



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner

Carryable coaling tower and two-person engine house.



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner

Clear Water Grain with freewheeling mill wheel.



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner

Summit Freight sits next to a short tunnel.

Below: Cattle Flatts Feed & Grain and Stock Yard as just built (left) and with landscaping after a few years (right).



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner

Due to its size, placing the engine house in the rail yard also required that some tracks be moved. This involved placing two switches into a 6 foot radius curve. My primary switch of choice is the Sunset Valley #6 switch, which has an approximate 8 foot radius curve. Forcing this switch into a 6 foot radius curve required that the approach tracks on each end have a short section of 5½ foot radius curve to compensate for the large radius curve of the switch. Most of my equipment could handle this, but my K-27 had problems in one direction on one approach. What I really needed was a #5 switch, but Sunset Valley only stocked #6 and #4 switches. The less than 4 foot radius of the #4 switch was too tight for most of my locomotives. It took me two years to get up the courage to try building my own #5 switch—which proved to be another major learning point. It took me close to six weeks to complete that first switch. It worked, but it looked like the mess it was and was not usable on the railroad. However, I learned from it and went on to build close to a dozen #5 switches that look good and work quite well. However, like my buildings, no two are exactly alike. This means they are not totally interchangeable, which is a bit of a disadvantage.

I once had a visitor observe that there are no two identical buildings and ask why. I guess it's because, having built a building, I managed to solve all of the

engineering problems associated with it. Building a second, identical building would involve no new challenges, so why build a second one? Water towers would be the exception here, but even with them, each has a slight difference as I tried something different in the construction, looking for a *better* solution. Another exception would be the switches. I found building switches to be addictive. I only stopped after building a dozen when I ran out of material. By the time I obtained more ties, rails, spikes, etc., the break had cured the addiction (for now.)

Another set of skills I have learned were those needed to convert locomotives from track power to battery power with remote control. My railroad is basically a single track, point-to-point design, with passing sidings to allow opposing trains to travel in opposite directions over the same right-of-way. Using track power would have been very restrictive in this environment. It also would require that I keep the track surfaces electrically clean—which was something I wanted to avoid.

The use of battery power with remote control provided the flexibility needed to have individual control of each locomotive. While my profession for 40 years was that of a computer software engineer, I also had a BS in Electrical Engineering, so converting the electrical systems of the locomotives from track



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner



Photo by Carla Brand Breithner

power to battery with remote control was not a difficult skill to pick up, if you ignore the mechanical part that involves “How in the world do I get inside of this locomotive? How does it come apart.” My first three locomotives were converted by a “professional,” primarily because, at the time, I was focusing on getting the railroad built and did not have the time to spend on these conversions. When each of these locomotives developed problems down the road, fixing these problems myself gave me the opportunity to slowly slide into the battery, R/C world.

The first problem was a first generation Airwire decoder that stopped working and needed to be replaced by a G3 decoder. Next was a steam locomotive with magnetic “chuff” pickups that had become intermittent. This required moving the magnets and magnetic reed switch to a different location. That was followed by the NiMH battery that would no longer hold a charge and was replaced by a Li-Ion battery which had a different size and shape so *everything* had to be moved to accommodate the new battery.

I finally took the plunge, doing my first, from-scratch conversion on a rail bus I won at a raffle. I figured that I had nothing to lose since the rail bus was basically *free*, so if I screwed it up, no great loss. When I won a Heisler at the annual raffle the following year the *real* challenge started. It took me three months to figure out how to get into the Heisler. (An extremely small black screw on an all black locomotive in an obscure location that couldn't be seen without a bright flashlight was the starting point.) There was considerably less internal space in the Heisler than in the rail bus so the biggest problem was “How do I squeeze all of the stuff into that small space?”

So, now that I feel comfortable building scale structures, building switches, laying track and rewiring locomotives, what's ahead down the tracks? I

find that I rarely run my own railroad as there are no challenges to overcome when running a single train. But with multiple trains running there is that constant challenge—“Can I make it from the siding I'm on to the next siding before an opposing train shows up, and if not, then how will the operator of the opposing train and I solve this conflict over the section of single track that we each want to use, i.e. who goes first and who waits—this time?”

The next big challenge seems to be learning how to maintain and repair my structures as they get older. I build these structures with the idea that they will need to stand up to Mother Nature during the five summer months they are out in the open, but even the best built structure eventually needs repair. In my case, I have a number of trees which drop branches on the railroad. Some of these branches can be rather large and would do considerable damage if they were to land on a structure. Thus far the really BIG branches have managed to miss the structures, but the smaller branches occasionally do cause some damage. There is also the damage from moisture, our old friend “wood rot.” So, each fall, when I take the buildings in for the winter, I note which ones need a little work and I spend my winter months repairing these damage spots.

While this is a *garden* railroad, I've managed to avoid having to learn about *gardening*, but my good luck can't last forever and I may actually have to learn something about gardening—*maybe*. Lately, my son, who I could never interest in the hobby, has taken a *big* interest in gardening, so I hope to enlist his help with the gardening half. My wife *was* my gardener, but balance issues no longer allow her to go climbing all over my railroad. So, here's to the future of garden railroad challenges and may there always be just one more challenge to overcome.



Photo by Carla Brand Breitner



Photo by Carla Brand Breitner

👉 Video Tours on YouTube 👈

www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9UuRnmxeIM {2012 Visit by LargeScale On Line}

www.youtube.com/embed/QR2umQL60ss {2015 Summer Tour segment by a Portland garden show *Garden Time TV*}

www.youtube.com/watch?v=vS5mK_u2ly0&t=357s {2016 Summer Tour} [intermittent rain not recommended for train electronics]

www.swrfernsehen.de/eisenbahn-romantik/folgen/broadcastcontrib-swr-36418.html {2017 in German: Gaps RR at 5:25}

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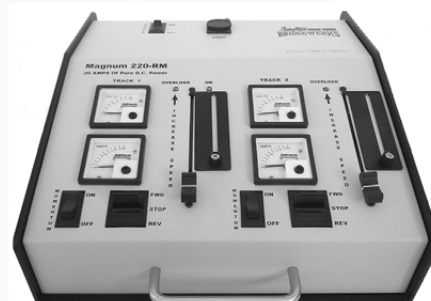
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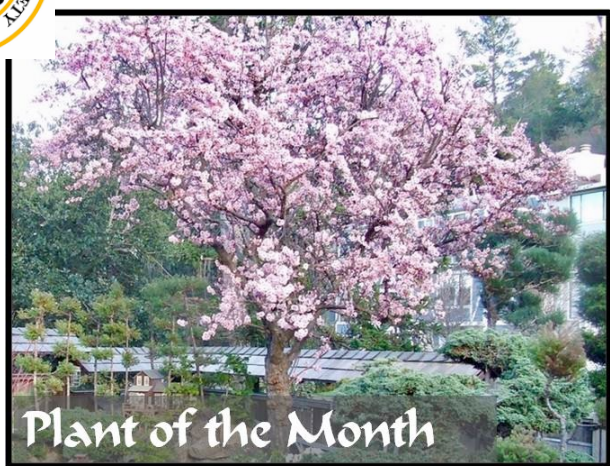
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-- By Richard Murray



BOTANICAL NAME: *Picea Pungens*, 'Globe'

COMMON NAME: Dwarf Colorado Blue Spruce

USDA ZONE: 2-8 (Down to -45 degrees F)

SUNSET ZONE: 1-10, 14-17

Description

This fantastic globe-shaped evergreen conifer is a dwarf. It is flat-topped and densely branched. The bright blue needles hold their color all year long, and the new growth is an even brighter blue in late spring. The plant provides a stunning contrast when planted among green plants. Stiff 1.5" needles point outward from the branches in all directions. Its growth rate is slow. It may eventually get to

4'x4'. The plant in the photo is 12" tall and was planted from a 2 gallon pot about 9 years ago. I prune it once a year to be sure it stays very small.

Culture

Picea pungens, 'Globe' is easily grown in average, acidic, well-drained soils. It likes full sun best, but will tolerate some light shade. It prefers rich, moist soils. Although established plants have some drought tolerance, soils should be kept consistently moist and not allowed to dry out in the early years. It generally prefers cool climates and will struggle in the heat and humidity of the deep South. There is no serious disease or insect problem. Most often it is sold as a grafted plant. Its parent, **Picea pungens**, is native to the central Rocky Mountains where it is typically found growing in moist locations from 6,000 to 11,000 feet in elevation.

It is a low maintenance plant. No pruning is required unless, like me, one wishes to keep the plant very small. When pruning is necessary, it is recommended to trim back only the new growth of the current season. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats.

Uses

Use it as an accent in Asian gardens or for contrast in gardens heavy in cool colors. It looks great next to a green lawn, or it can add brightness to dark parts of the yard. It can work nicely in a rock garden. However, its real value is as a simple specimen. Don't forget that it can look terrific in a garden railroad!

Nomenclature

The genus name, *Picea*, is reportedly derived from the Latin word *pix* meaning pitch in reference to the sticky resin typically found in spruce bark. *Pungens* means sharp-pointed in reference to the needles.

Special Features

It is a North American native. Because of its many fine qualities, it has been the winner of the prestigious Award of Garden Merit of the Royal Horticultural Society. It is certainly one of my most favorite plants.





Here is a virtual tour of our Garden Railway - **Chris and Noëlla Simmons'** "Neu Zillertalbahn Garden Railroad".

<https://youtu.be/wZXhiPAWg4M>

Here is a picture of myself and my wife.



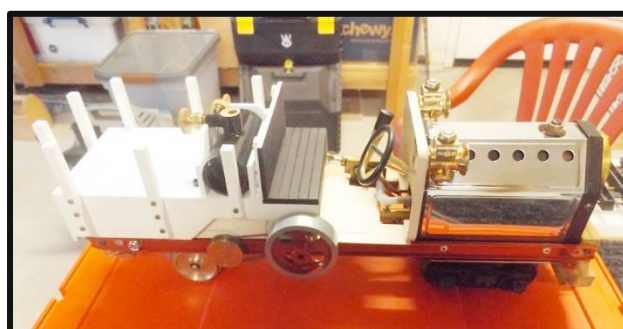
Here is a picture of the railroad.



##

[Check out the YouTube video link above. Take an enjoyable ride through a new layout. – eNews Ed.]

Dave Frediani writes: About two years ago I converted a Mamod roadster to a rail truck and it never ran that great so I decided to install a ceramic burner which made all the difference. It now runs very well for about twelve minutes. The ceramic kit is made by Mamod and sold by Mini Steam of Ohio. It's very easy to install. The cost is \$149.00.

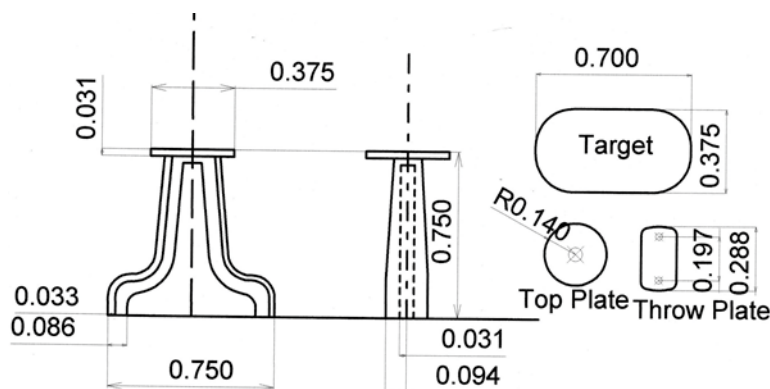


How and Why I Built Turnout Indicators

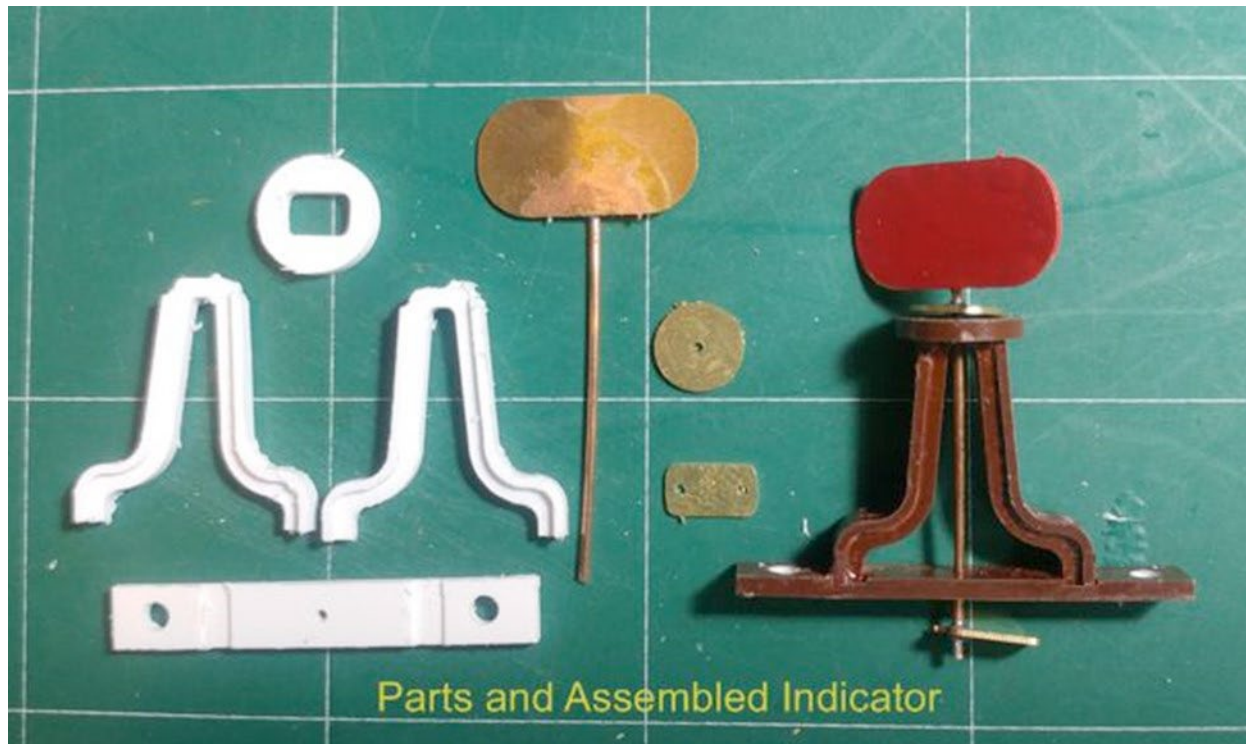
Photos and article by Ron Cole

Before beginning construction of my layout, I was puzzling how to control the turnouts. The options I considered were 3 styles of manual control:

- Ground Throws
 - Pros
 - Positive movement of turnout points
 - Low profile not susceptible to damage
 - Cons
 - Can't see position of turnout from a distance based upon position of throw arm
- Vertical Throws – Switch Stand – Harp Stand
 - Pros
 - Positive movement of turnout points
 - Prototypical like movement
 - Can see position of turnout from a distance based upon position of target or throw arm
 - Cons
 - High profile susceptible to damage
 - Commercial units are oversized for 1/32nd scale
- Finger Flicks (also known as over center springs.)
 - Pros
 - Easy to build and maintain
 - Easy to operate
 - Cons
 - Can't see position of turnout from a distance
- Conclusion
 - Need a position indicator that has a low profile, but is visible from a distance
 - A 24 inch switch stand is only 3/4 inch tall in 1/32nd scale
 - Distance that points move must rotate target 90 degrees
 - Turnout aligned for through route, can't see target
 - Turnout aligned for diverging route, target is 90 degrees to through route, visible!!
 - To be used with a finger flick/ over center spring mechanism to move turnout points
 - Not be a functional switch stand
- What to model
 - At the Issaquah Depot Museum in Issaquah WA a 24 inch tall switch stand is on display
 - Took photos of switch stand and traced the image in Corel
 - Drew trace of picture in BobCad a CAD/CAM program
 - Full drawing resized to 1/32nd scale
 - Determined legs can be in 2 pieces that are identical and then glued back to back
 - Round casting glued on to legs centered by a tab
 - Legs glued to base



- Material for Parts
 - Plastic – 0.125 inch thick Styrene for legs
 - 0.060 inch thick Styrene for base and round casting top
 - Brass sheet 0.017 inch thick for:
 - Target, washer and throw lever
 - Throw and target wire 0.032 inch phos/bronze
 - All parts could be machined from brass if guests abuse certain indicators



- Machine parts. I have a Taig NC Mill that I use to machine these parts.
 - Upright legs
 - Base
 - Round casting
 - Target
 - Throw lever – holes are 0.197 apart to provide 90 degree rotation of target
 - Washer

Continued on next page.

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Assembly

- Glue legs to base and round casting to legs



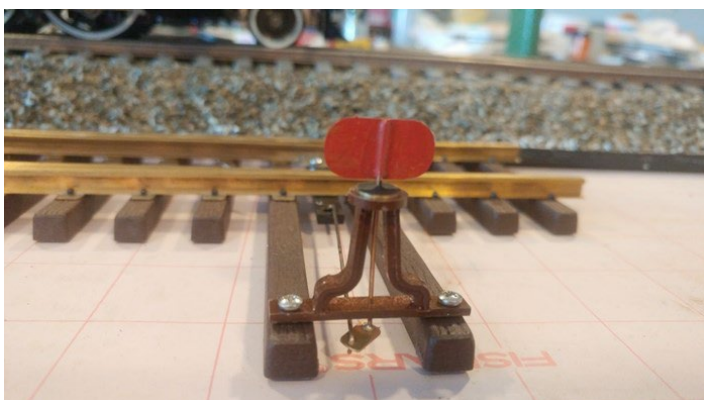
- solder wire to target
- solder washer to wire
- paint leg assembly
- paint target assembly
- Assemble target to legs ,
then solder throw lever to target wire



I made enough parts to assemble 20 targets.

• Mounting

- Drill pilot holes for 2-56 screws
- Cut and Bend throw wire to fit between target and turnout (see photos ~~on next page~~ below)



Target mounted on turn out and ready to use.





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Backyard Basics

By Jim Garcia

On May 4th Suzy Namba, our Valley Flyer Editor, sent out an email blast asking our club membership “to share the wealth of your knowledge about anything a newbie or experienced garden railroader might want to know”. She said that she would like to include an article each month to cover one subject each month.

Mike Epstein recalled that I had created a website shortly after Sue and I completed our garden railroad project and suggested that I share the link once again to help kick off the series.

Check it out at <https://www.enjoygardenrr.com/>. It's simply a “Remedial Guide to Set Up a Garden Railroad” that I created to satisfy a website project for one of my graphic design classes at Sacramento City College. It gave me the opportunity to document the planning processes that I had to consider to set up our railroad. The website is set up to unscramble some of the technical language and help a “novice” visualize a plan. Talking about radius, scale, gauge, code, DCC, etc. often causes “analysis paralysis” and delays projects. I incorporated things that I learned from just about everyone in the club and especially from Dick Friedman, Bob Dean, Ralph Merrill, and Ben Shell, who shared all sorts of experience. I even had Marc Horovitz, former editor of Garden Railways Magazine take a look at my preliminary work. He was thrilled that someone was developing this type of website and provided some technical edits along the way! Ben and Mike Epstein, as a new member, helped with a final review. My “in-house” editor, Sue, was always there reviewing my text and any coding I was doing for the website.

By the way, if any club member would like to have a picture or two placed in the photo gallery, please send them over. I will find a spot for them.

SVGRS Club Members' Covid-19 Isolation Activities — Building Mountains

Trying to make the most of the Shelter In Place mandate, the **Nambas** focused their efforts on raising the Sierra Nevada mountains in the northeast corner of their layout! When complete, our layout will consist of 3 independent loops. The first, a southwest mining railroad that loops over and under itself, was on display at the August 2016 general meeting. Our second line runs just to the east of the mine train and represents a lumber company. We finished laying the track just before the end of 2019 and still need to “accessorize” it. The third and largest loop will run around and beyond the first two lines and will be elevated adjacent to two fences. Instead of hanging the track on the fenceposts, we decided to build a retaining wall out of 6x8x16 concrete blocks and included a raised planting area in the corner for some dwarf conifers. The Sierra Nevada backdrop was made using more concrete block, broken pieces of bricks and pavers, and textured concrete “tiles”. We made the tiles using a technique learned at a NGRC Skills Session last year, and they've worked pretty well to display the craggy and fractured surface we were looking for. Jeff used a chisel, mallet and wire snips to break the tiles into usable shapes and they were then mortared into place. The basic shape is now complete, and the next step is to apply some paint and weathering. A little bit south on the mainline, we are starting construction of another smaller mountain that will consist of 3 tunnels -- 1 for the lumber train and 2 for the interregional railroad. The mountains will be made up of a small shell over the tracks and a larger shell that represents the mountain. It looks rough now, but hopefully you can see our vision in the attached work in progress photos. We hope we will be able to show you our handiwork in October, IF we are ever allowed to go out and play trains together again.

Page 6



Textured tile in process ↗



Tile ready to mortar in place ↘



The Sierras at sunset ↘



Framework for the outer shell is in progress →



Step by Step Weathering

Weathering: From Toy to Model in a Few Easy Steps

By Bob Frein

A few years ago, I attempted my first weathering job in all of my 40 years of model railroading. It was an N Scale box car and it looked OK, but not great. Over the course of the next year or so, I repainted and weathered my Piko Mogul locomotive and a Kalamazoo 0-4-4 switcher, complete with custom decals. Both of these I was very happy with.



During the quarantine, I decided to weather my Bachmann B&O flat car. I think everyone has owned this car at one time or another, but the bright yellow just didn't sit with me.

Step 1: I disassembled the trucks from the frame and painted the entire model with Dull Coat to take the shine off. I then painted the "wood" deck with a light gray primer and made some dings in the outer frame of the car. I try to find some kind of reference photo on the internet to work off of. It may not be the same kind of car, but you can usually see where dirt/grime/rust build up during use. [For reference photos searchable in multiple ways, try www.rrpicturearchives.net – Ed.]

Step 2: I start with light coats of Mississippi Mud and Khaki Tan (Acrylic paint found at Hobby Lobby for \$1 or less) that are watered down. Lots of



Dings to the flat car frame add that "used" look.

light coats as they build up the color. I think I did about 15 light coats before I was happy with the dirt/grime part of it. I next used some Charcoal Gray and Black to add some darker grime and oil to the sides of the car.

Step 3: I painted the wood deck various shades of brown until I was happy with it and then added some gray to the top to simulate aged wood that has been out in the elements.



The weathered deck looks like it has seen many winters on the rails.

Step by Step Weathering continued



"Rust Color" applied to Wheels



Weathered Coupler



Rust and Mud/Grime on Springs

Step 4: I took apart the wheels from the trucks and mixed up Burnt Sienna and Burnt Umber to make up a "rust color." I painted the wheels front and back with the rust color. I added some rust to the springs on the trucks and painted the couplers with it as well. Again, many light coats to build up the color. I used the Mississippi Mud and Khaki Tan on the truck frames and the undercarriage of the car.

Step 5: With the brake wheel, cut levers, stakes and stirrup steps off, I hit them with Dull Coat and then applied light coats of the grime/dirt combinations mentioned earlier. I then reattached them to the car.

Step 6: I reassembled the entire car and added some detailing. Stains on the deck, rust at the base of the brake wheel... and rust around anything that could possibly rust. I like to let my work sit for a few days and come back and look at it again to see if I need to add anything to it. Once I am finished, I hit it with a light coat of Dull Coat to seal everything in.

Remember... there is no right or wrong; no two cars ever look the same on real railroads. Give weathering a try — and be sure to share your pictures with us.



This B&O flat car, setting on Bob's work table as it waits final approval, no longer has that circus yellow newness. Dirt, grime, oil stains and rust trails "tell" of years of use hauling loads on the railroad.





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Mr. Haney's Traveling Emporium on the Silverton Northern Railroad

By Chuck Klein

Many of you may remember the sitcom *Green Acres* starring Eddie Albert and Eva Gabor as a couple who move from New York City to a country farm. Produced by Filmways as a sister show to *Petticoat Junction*, the series was first broadcast on CBS from September 15, 1965 to April 27, 1971.



One of the wacky characters on the show was a gentleman named Mr. Haney. He was a sneaky and notorious conman and a proprietor of goods that were overpriced, damaged or poorly made, with very few of his wares ever being of any decent quality. He drove his goods around in an old pickup truck whose signage he changed to advertise what he wanted to unload.



Mr. Haney and his truck

I decided that our Silverton Northern (SN) Railroad needed a character like Mr. Haney. Instead of driving an old truck around to sell his wares, Mr. Haney was able to obtain-to his financial favor-an old streetcar. He refurbished the streetcar into a railbus to haul his wares on the SN Railroad, going from town to town trying to convince its citizens that he can give them incredible deals. He even calls his railbus "Mr. Haney." The SN Railroad agreed to let Mr. Haney travel over its rails as long as he shared a percentage of his profits with them. For the past few years though Mr. Haney has claimed he hasn't sold anything despite several routine deliveries. I'm sure one of these days the SNRR will see that just like everyone else, they too, are being snookered by Mr. Haney.

The Project

I purchased a used Bachmann "United Traction Company" streetcar online. When I received it and tried running it, I found that the gears in the motor block were cracked and it ran poorly. I expected this because of reviews that I had read about this Bachmann product and its faults. Reading online comments, I learned that I could purchase a USA Trains motor block that would work well as a replacement. I purchased one and after doing a few minor modifications to the underside of the streetcar, I was able to attach the motor block. It now runs very well at all speeds.

SDGRS News - July 2020

10

Next, using my Dremel, I was able to cut away most of the body of the streetcar leaving the two ends intact so they could hold the roof. I proceeded with outfitting the interior with a "boiler" (a PVC T-pipe) in which a battery pack resides (our Silverton Northern Railroad is RC battery operated). I added a storage chest for firewood in which a 'G Scale Graphics Railboss 4' receiver is hidden. The on/off switch and battery recharging jack are situated in the front cab. Finally, after the body modifications were completed, I was able to add additional details and wares for Mr. Haney to sell. He is located in the front cab driving the railbus.



Mr. Haney's railbus started out as a Bachmann United Traction Company streetcar.

Mr. Haney is seen driving the railbus from the front. The front panel and headlight are from the original streetcar frame. The headlight shines when the railbus is turned on. The cowcatcher was found in my junk box. The bell on top is an Ozark Miniatures.



Left side of the railbus. Chickens and dried fish are seen hanging from cords. A ladder made from stucco wire provides access to the goods on top. Signage indicates there is Foul Fish & Fruits (misspelling and lack of grammar intentional) for sale as well as Fine Furnishings, Livestock, and Tools.



SDGRS News - July 2020



Right side of the railbus. Arnold, a pig, is Mr. Haney's companion and is seen riding in the cab with Mr. Haney (right). Pots and pans are seen hanging and tools for sale are in crates and barrels. The top of the railbus is filled with more merchandise. Signage indicates just a fraction of what Mr. Haney has to sell. The smokestack is an extra that I found in my junk box.

The top of the railbus is outfitted with a platform where Mr. Haney can store more merchandise. Here we see bags of flour and sugar, fresh fruits and vegetables, a potted plant, a watering can, a clock, a sewing machine and even a goldfish bowl with a goldfish in it! The red megaphone for the whistle is actually a cake decorating tip that found a new purpose.



Back of the railbus. A water tank supplies water to the boiler. The tank is made from a piece of PVC pipe covered with craft sticks. The tank cover is the top of a water bottle that was trimmed to fit the curvature of the tank. The coupler is a Kadee coupler.

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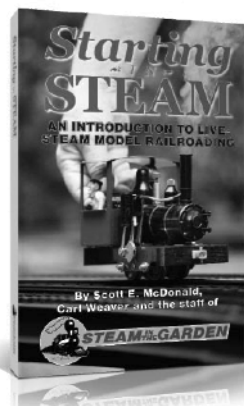
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MAIL-ORDER NURSERIES: A PLANT SOURCE FOR GARDEN RAILWAYS

By Don Herzog

For the past fifty five years, my wife Becky and I have owned Miniature Plant Kingdom, a nursery specializing in miniature and dwarf plants. At the height of our business, we carried fourteen hundred varieties. It was a one-stop shopping experience for bonsai, rock garden, fairyland and garden railway enthusiasts.

When I was a freshman at California State Polytechnic College in San Luis Obispo, each freshman had to weed 100 one-gallon plants which had grown weeds during the summer. I was given a collection of 100 miniature roses donated to the college and by the end of the season fell in love with them. "Condominium" was the new word of the day and I felt that every one of them should have a miniature rose on their patio.

By the time I graduated, I wanted every variety of miniature rose and was gathering a collection from around the world. I even visited a fellow collector in Japan several times to share experiences in the ensuing years.

I was married in 1965 and while landscaping movie sets in Hollywood, opened a small retail miniature rose nursery. It was open on weekends on a small piece of property my father owned on a main street near where we lived. We moved to Sebastopol in 1969 with a large moving van full of household goods, a greenhouse and a collection of over four hundred varieties of miniature roses. Shortly thereafter, we purchased 2½ acres of land, placed a mobile home on it and planted my miniature roses. The following Spring, I took cuttings and propagated a few thousand plants. Miniature Plant Kingdom was now in business on a full time basis.

Steps like this have been the beginning of many mail-order nurseries, from a hobby to a business. I have been retired a few years now and desired to build our fourth operating layout on our property. This required me to buy my plants from other nurseries. But where? My answer: mail-order nurseries.

A mail-order nursery may carry a few hundred to thousands of varieties, so there are usually some miniature or dwarf varieties that we can use in our garden railroads. However, because of the extent of these collections, nurseries only propagate a small number of plants of each variety at any given time. The miniature plants that we desire are not grown in great quantities due to limited demand and often only 30 to 150 plants per nursery are available per year.

If you are interested in any particular plant, get in touch with me and I can provide more details and can send the photo to you as well.

Note that this article was written prior to COVID. While I understand that each of these nurseries remains open for business, they may be doing so only by mail order and not be welcoming visitors at this time. So, if you are thinking of traveling to the northwest and visiting any of them, check with them first.

Don

Don Herzog can be contacted at:
donjherzog@gmail.com

MAIL-ORDER NURSERIES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3**Nurseries**

Becky and I spent a few days before the 2019 National Garden Railway convention in Portland, Oregon checking out some mail-order nurseries that I had located on the internet.

Joy Creek Nursery, Scappoose, Oregon. The first mail-order nursery we visited was Joy Creek Nursery west of Portland. They have a beautiful garden and very nice sales area with well labeled, beautifully grown healthy plants in 4-inch pots. That day, I found nine varieties of plants available that I could use. However there were over 50 more varieties that would be available the next Spring that I can also use. The cost of most of the plants was \$6-10. They did have some very rare miniature daphne that only grow a few inches tall for \$25 when available and also a very large selection of tiny, hardy sedums (succulents) that are worth considering. Their website is www.joycreek.com/plants and has pictures, descriptions and availability of each plant. They are located at 20300 N.W. Watson Road, Scappoose, OR 97056. The telephone number is 503/543-7474. If you should visit, you may find plants not listed online.

Edelweiss Perennials, Canby, Oregon. Edelweiss Perennials is a very small mail-order nursery specializing in choice perennials, many of which are not commonly known—the good, old and sometimes almost lost, as well as the new—as long as they are good garden plants and not over commercialized. They hold an open house one time a year that they post on their web site. I found nine varieties of plants available that day that I could use. Additionally, I found eight other plants for my garden railroad and two more on their website for my flower garden that I will order in the Spring. Their plants are beautiful, healthy and available in several size pots. Most of their plants sell for \$7.50 to \$15. Their website is www.edelweissperennials.com and has pictures, pot size available, height the plant grows, USDA hardiness zone, flowering season and growing exposure for each plant. They are located at 29800 S. Barlow Rd., Canby, OR 97013. Their telephone number is 503/263-4680. They have no office staff and are often out of the office, so leave a message when you can be reached and they will get back to you as soon as possible.

Heaths and Heathers, Shelton, WA. Heaths and Heathers is a one-lady, mail-order nursery carrying over 1,000 varieties of heaths and heathers and has the largest collection in the United States and possibly the world. Karla Lortz is the owner. I have purchased miniature heathers for my garden railroads from her for over 20 years and have visited the nursery a few times. We also met every year at the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show as we were both venders there for many years. Her nursery is open for business from September 1 to the end of May. Most plants are \$6

MAIL-ORDER PLANTS

Here are photos of some of the plants listed in this article. The number below each photo corresponds to the one in the plant listing. The figure in each photo is about 3 inches tall. To see the other plants, join the Zoom meeting.



1.



4.



5.



8.

MAIL-ORDER NURSERIES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

each. The pot size varies as she uses several growers to produce plants for her. The nursery is located at 631 E. Pickering Rd., Shelton, WA 98584. The website is www.heathsandheathers.com and lists flower color, time of flowering, size of plant and the foliage color for each plant and has a wealth of information about the plants. The phone number is 360/427-5318.

Things You Need to Know When Selecting Plants

Before looking at nursery catalogues there are three things that you need to know:

1. Your hardiness zone. If you do not know it, look up USDA hardiness zones on the internet to find it. Many nurseries list the hardiness zones that the plants will survive in. If your zone falls within those zones, then you might consider purchasing it. If you are one zone higher or lower than the zones listed for your selection you might try it anyway. I live on a ridge that is 5 degrees warmer in the winter than the valley where the weather station is located and marginal plants do just fine.

2. Your Soil Conditions. If the plant description states that the plant needs excellent drainage, it may be an alpine plant that lives in the cracks of boulders in the high mountains. If your soil is clay or does not drain well, I have a solution. About twenty years ago, my daughter wanted to grow some plants between the sidewalk and the curb. She picked out 36 alpine plants that needed excellent drainage. I told her that these plants might not make it as her soil was heavy clay, but to plant the plants a half inch higher than the ground and to put washed chicken grit underneath them. Twenty years later, most have survived and are doing well. This solution has also worked well in my garden railroads and we had 117 inches of rain two years ago. So, plant these plants one half inch higher than ground level and put a crushed rock, chicken grits or pea gravel washed clean of all fines in a sieve or colander around the plant to fill the space. This will help keep the crown and foliage of the plant dryer in wet weather.

3. Other Growing Requirements. Look up the plant on the internet to learn all of the growing requirements.

Things You Need to Know about Purchasing via Mail Order

1. Your Conditions May Vary from those of the Nursery. The descriptions are for where the nursery is located and your climate may differ. It may get colder in the winter and/or hotter in the summer. Your climate may be more or less humid. It may receive more or less rain and your soil type may differ. What this means, is that at your location the plants may grow a bit slower or faster and may be a bit smaller or larger when full grown than in the nursery description. Always look up descriptions on the internet to

MAIL-ORDER NURSERIES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7



11.



12.



13.



15.



18.

get more information for your location.

2. Handling and Shipping Charges. Aside from the cost of the plants, there is usually a handling and shipping charge. The cost of collecting your order and packing it is the handling charge. Shipping charges are at actual cost and there is no profit built in.

3. Look Through Entire Catalogue. Look through the entire catalogue from start to finish noting those varieties that interest you which may be few and far between the larger plant listings. This may take a few hours, but it is worth finding those little gems that interest us.

Plants I'll Discuss During the Zoom Meeting

(or maybe some next time)

Size of plants is height by width

* indicates needs excellent drainage

Plants from Joy Creek Nursery

1. *Armeria juniperifolia* – 3 inches by 6 inches – pink flowers in late spring to early summer – zones 8,9 *

2. *Dianthus freynii* – 2 inches by 12 inches – tiny pink flowers in summer – zones 6-10 *

3. *Dianthus simulans* – 3 inches by 6 inches – tiny rose colored carnation like flowers in summer – zones 6-8 *

4. *Hebe buechananii*, 'Minor' – 6 inches by 18 in a long time – white flowers in late summer – zones 8,9

5. *Hebe* 'Christabel' – 5 inches by 11 inches – white flowers in summer (sometimes doesn't bloom) – zones 7-9

6. *Hebe imbricata* – 6 inches by 10 inches (can grow larger in some areas) – white flowers – zones 7-9

7. *Hebe Jasper* – 12 inches by 15 inches – white flowers May through June – zones 7-9

8. *Saxifraga longifolia* hybrid – 2-3 inches by 10 inches – sparse bloomer – Zones 6-9 *

9. *Thymus polytrichus* 'Minus' – 1 inch by 12 inches -rose flowers in summer – zones 5-9 – Also known as Elfin thyme

10. *Thymus praecox* 'Nutmeg' – 1 inch by 14 inches – pink flowers in summer – Zones 5

11. *Veronica liwanensis* – 2 inches by 1-2 feet – tiny blue flowers spring to summer – Zones 4-9 *

Plants from Edelweiss perennials

12. *Astilbe glaberrima* var. *Saxatilis* – 4-5 inches – white flowers in summer – zones 4-8

13. *Cyclamen purpurascens* – 2-3 inches – rose pink flowers in summer to late autum – very fragrant – requires shade – zones 4-8

MAIL-ORDER NURSERIES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8



21.



23.



24.



27.



28.

14. *Daphne cneorum* x *arbuscula* – 3-5 inches by 8 inches – pink flowers late spring to early summer -zones 5-9 *

15. *Globularia incanescens* – 2-3 inches by 4 inches - lilac-blue flowers in June and July - Zones 4-8 *

16. *Iris suaveolens* – 4-5 inches by 6 inches – yellow flowers in March and April – Zones 4-8 *

17. *Iris suaveolens* ‘*Rubromarginata*’ – 3-4inches by 5 inches - violet flowers in March and April. Zones 4-8 *

18. *Petrohagia saxifrage* ‘*Rosette*’ – 8 inches by 18 inches – pink flowers in the summer – Zones 5-8 *

19. *Thalictrum kiusianum* – 5-8 inches by 12 - 18 inches – purplish-pink flowers in the summer – zones 5-8

Plants from Heaths and Heathers

20. *Cassiope selaginoides* f. *nana* – 1inch by 4 inches – white bell flowers in April and May – Foliage grey green – Needs shade – zones 3-9 *

21. *Calluna vulgaris* ‘*Flatling*’ – 4 inches by 18 inches – few mauve flowers in August and September- dense hummocks – zones 4-9

22. *Calluna vulgaris* ‘*Golden Carpet*’ – 4 inches by 12 inches – mauve flowers in late summer – zones 4-9

23. *Calluna vulgaris* ‘*John F. Letts*’- 4 inches by 10 inches – lavender flowers in late summer – gold foliage – zones 4-9

24. *Calluna vulgaris* ‘*Manning’s Minima*’ – 2 inches by 14 inches – Pink flowers in August and September – low spreading – zones 4-9

25. *Calluna vulgaris* ‘*Velvet Dome*’ – 2 inches by 10 inches – does not bloom – dense dwarf habbit – zones 4-9

26. *Calluna vulgaris* ‘*White Lawn*’ – 2 inches by 16 inches – white flowers in August and September – Zones

27. *Calluna vulgaris* ‘*Yellow Globe*’ – 4 inches by 18 inches – mauve flowers August and September – zones 4-9

28. *Erica* x *williamsii* ‘*Gold Button*’ – 2 inches by 4 inches – few mauve flowers August and September – zones 4-9 *

Note: *Callunas* do not do well in high summer heat and humidity. Try *Ericas* instead which do just fine!

Nashville will host the 36th
National Garden Railway
Convention in 2021.



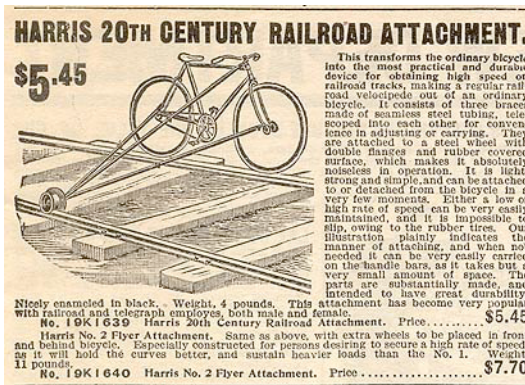
May 30– June 5, 2021

Make plans now to attend and
support garden railroading.

Updated information is at the
website: **ngrc2021.com**

The convention will include
Layout Tours in Nashville, clinics
and the vendor hall, plus
an ice cream social, BBQ at
the WildHorse Saloon, and
Banquet. Add-on events include
train excursions and tours of
the Kentucky Railroad Museum,
a Riverboat ride on the General
Jackson Showboat, a night concert
and a day backstage tour at the
Grand Ole Opry, and tours of
the Jack Daniels Distillery and
the Country Music Hall of Fame.
Other events may be added,
so check the convention website
for information.

This railroad bike could be modeled
to sit outside a trackside shed on an
early 20th century RR.



**38th National
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Convention
2023**

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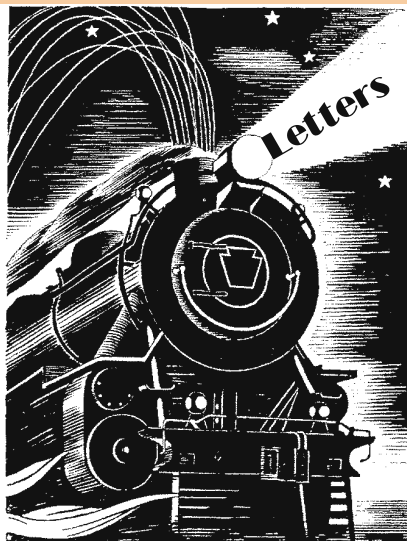


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STRAIGHT FROM THE IRON HORSE'S MOUTH

Letters to the Editor should be sent as e-mails only to Carla Brand Breitner at carlabbb@earthlink.net.

Letters will then be addressed accordingly and/or passed on to the author for further edification. Unless marked otherwise, letters to this publication are assumed to be submitted for print. Please include your name and club affiliation. Please note that we may not be able to print all letters, though we will try to respond to them. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We are unable to answer requests for information about specific products or systems; these are best addressed to the appropriate manufacturer.

Topiary on the Tortoise & Lizard Bash

I am very excited about this new publication and especially like how it covers a wealth of different subjects associated with the various aspects of garden railroading, as well as the "G-scale" hobby in general. It will be nice to have direct contact with those who are actually out there "doing it" and being able to receive a response in short order. Kudos to the Editor and all involved.

The "View from the Cab" on the acrylic trestle by Todd Brody is very interesting. But what interests me more are the topiary trees located on the layout. Can you ask Todd what kinds of trees these are and how he keeps them like that?

Keep it up as I am looking forward to future issues.

Gary Woolard, *The Garden Railroad Hobo*
Santa Clarita Valley Garden Railroad Club

Thank you for the kind words, Gary. I've passed this question on to Todd Brody and he responds:

The trees are dwarf crepe myrtles (Myrtus communis 'Compacta') purchased through Monrovia Nurseries. These plants are now ~25 years old and no higher than my hips. They acquire/maintain their shape through regular trimming three to four times a year, with each tree taking about half a day to complete at each interval. Like most living things, crepe myrtles don't last forever. However, because the trees are always cut at the onset of flowering and because they never have a chance to go to seed, they never seem to age and will probably outlast me. Thanks for your interest and enjoy your railroad.

Todd Brody
Orange County Garden Railway Society

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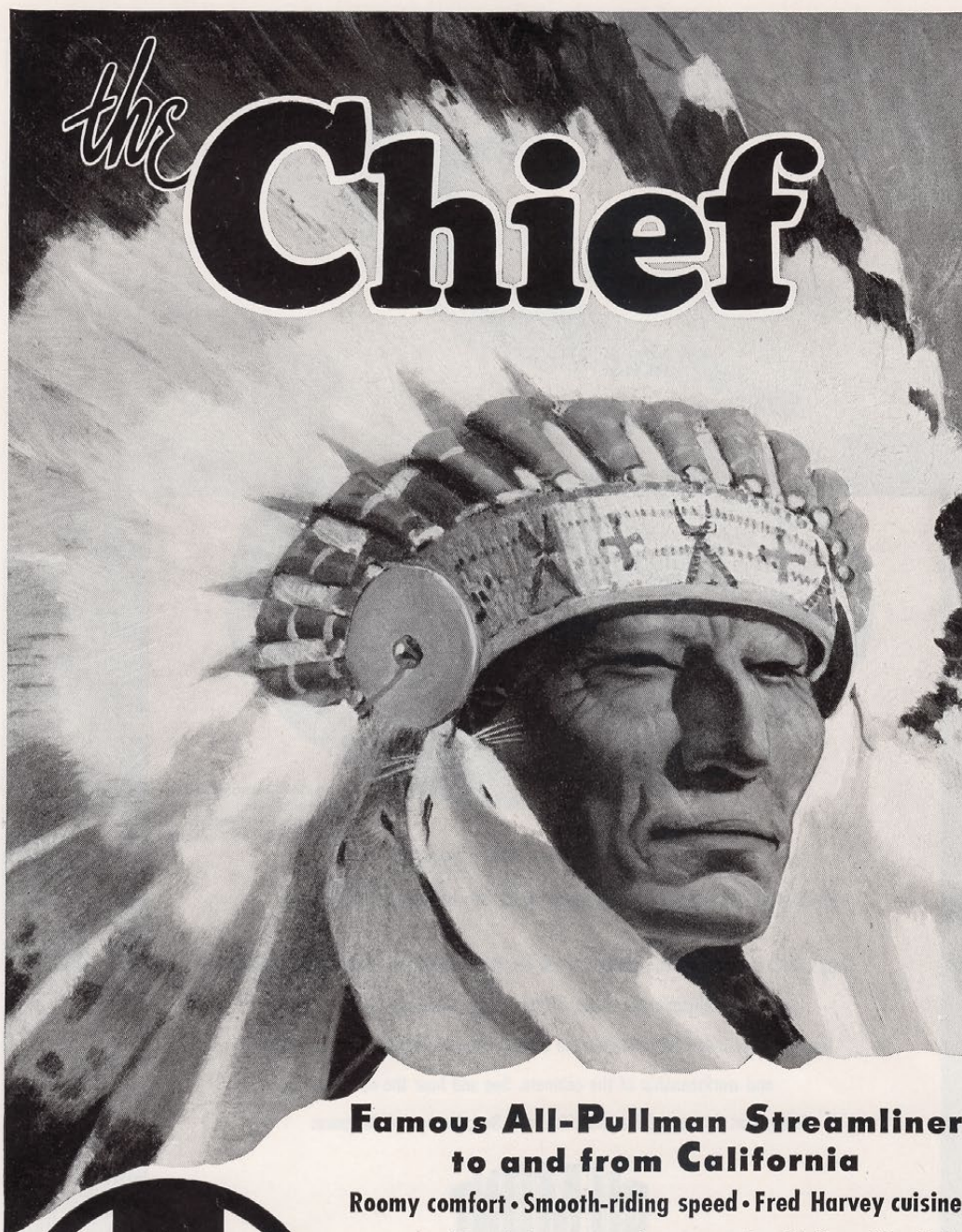
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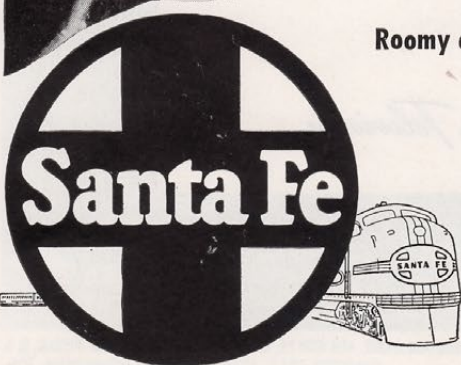


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An Open Letter to the Garden Railroading Community

from Bill Derville, Rose City Garden Railway Society President 2013-2019

For the past five years, most of the clubs on the west coast have been a part of a network of clubs; exchanging newsletters and surveying clubs about such things as dues, membership growth and other club issues. Through our newsletter exchange, we have gotten to know each other better. We have sometimes gotten permission to print an article in another newsletter that would be of interest to our memberships.

Since Kalmbach Media announced that our only national "G-scale only" publication, *Garden Railways Magazine*, would be folded into an all-scale magazine, our community needs a way to share information about local, regional, and national conventions, garden railroads that will be open to the public, and any admission fees charged. Newcomers to the hobby need to be able to find a list of garden railway clubs and societies by state, the area they serve, and links to their website. Our vendors, who have been left with few options to keep their name and products before those in the hobby, need a vehicle to provide that exposure. Without our vendors, we would not have the products we need to build our layouts, or the engines and rolling stock to run on them. Our beloved hobby would slowly die.

After a meeting of the West Coast Coalition of Clubs, we decided to create a sample publication using material from our past newsletters and adding some typical advertisements. This eNewsletter is the sample product we have produced.

So far, we have identified 95 clubs in the USA, 12 in Canada, and 16 in other parts of the world that we will be reaching out to ask them to participate in this effort.

The intent would be to distribute the eNewsletter for free. We feel that to get the proper exposure, it should not wait on a website for people to retrieve. It needs to be pushed out to those in our hobby via e-mail. Rather than build a large list of e-mail addresses (hard to maintain and could have security issues), we felt it would be better to send it to clubs and societies—and have them forward it to their membership. We would also send it to those not a member of a club who request it and to vendors in the hobby.

We would ask clubs for permission for our editor to republish articles from local newsletters to make up each issue. We would like to feature at least one garden railway in each issue, much as *Garden Railway Magazine* did. Tom Gaps' railway is featured in this sample issue, a railroad many of you visited during the 2019 National Convention in Portland, Oregon. Because this is an electronic magazine, we can include links to videos that people can watch. Direct article and photo submissions might also be welcomed.

Much is yet to be determined. This is just a start to show everyone what it is possible to do. We would like a conversation with interested clubs throughout the world on some sort of coalition of clubs. No name has been selected, no organization or charter has been decided. An editor needs to be selected, and a website established with a webmaster. Our West Coast clubs felt it better to let the larger organization create, define, and determine where we go from here.

We look forward to your response. Please include your club name and geographic area with your comments.

We will follow up with a survey asking one person per club to provide their club name, area covered, website if you have one, a copy of a newsletter if you publish one, contact information, and such information as whether your club is willing to forward our publication to your membership and the name of the person from your club with whom we can interact (including Zoom calls) to further discuss this organization and how to move this idea forward.

It is time for our hobby to come together to share national information on events and new products. We hope to offer our vendors an inexpensive advertising platform (to support the newsletter and a website) while club participation would be free.

Please circulate this sample publication to your membership, or at least your board, to consider. We look forward to your comments.

Bill Derville

West Coast Network of Clubs

Chairman of 2019 National Garden Railway Convention
simplyGReNews@gmail.com



MAGAZINES & INFO WEBSITES

Garden Railways online
grw.trains.com

Narrow Gauge & Shortline Gazette
ngslgazette.com

forums.mylargescale.com

Model Railroader Magazine
mrr.trains.com

Steam in the Garden Magazine
steamup.com

largescalecentral.com

model-railroad-hobbyist.com

groups.io/g/ModelRailroadsofSoCal • familygardentrains.com • elmassian.com

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Gold Coast Garden Railway Society
(Ventura & Santa Barbara County)
Bruce Kuebler • pbkuebler@sbcglobal.net
gcgrs.com

Orange County Garden Railway Society
(Orange County)
Todd Brody • toddalin@cox.net
orangecountygardenrailwaysociety.com

Santa Clarita Valley Garden Railroad Club
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Carla Breitner • carlab@earthlink.net
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Southern California Garden Railway Society
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