

in this issue >>>

- >>The Twin Falls County Fair was great
- >>How is scenery built?
- >>Member Highlight – Clarence Kerley
- >>Track Maintenance
- >>Editor's Message
- >>New Club Officers



Quarterly Insight into the Magic Valley Model Railroaders – 4th Quarter 2023 Edition

On The Rails



Who We Are

Magic Valley Model Railroaders

The Magic Valley Model Railroaders is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization housed in the Railroad Building on the Twin Falls Country Fairgrounds. The club officially moved from a house-to-house model railroaders club to the fairgrounds in 1989 at the request of the then fair manager Cindy Demoney. We have grown into four active model railroads, G, O, HO and N scales. The club is comprised of volunteers who put in hours of work and funds to keep the trains moving.

Drop by the second Saturday of the month at noon to enjoy the trains, scenery and realism of the model railroads. And if you have a train you would like to run on one of our layouts, bring it out and give it a run on the rails.

Information about how we operate and an application can be found on our website at www.mvmrr.com.

If you would like further information, you can email us at mvmmodelrailroaders@gmail.com.

The Twin Falls County Fair was GREAT!!!

We owe all of you who came out to visit us at the 2023 County Fair a great big THANK YOU. From the opening of the doors Wednesday, August 30th until the last train stopped on Labor Day, September 4th, we enjoyed presenting the trains and scenery each day. The weather this year was spectacular most of the time. G Scale had the new panels up to provide shade during the afternoon hours with plenty of seating to just sit and enjoy the sights and sounds of the locomotives. Inside, was new scenery on the layouts and even a huge model of the Union Pacific “Big Boy” which was printed on a 3D printer and donated to us for permanent showing. O Scale was up to their usual performance as conductor and had the kid’s announcing arrival and departure of the trains. In addition, Tom had the gantry crane running and many of the youth figured out how to load the gondola car with old rails. HO had several trains running around the “Big Boy” show piece along with the new farm scene for all to marvel at. N Scale was running up and over the two twin helixes on a steady basis and even down and around the north side short helix under the new logging mountain. We thank all of you who purchased the 50/50 raffle tickets to support our efforts as we maintain and expand the layouts. The total amount sold was \$2,810. The winner of the raffle was Art Hoag who operates the Mary Alice Park on Main Street, downtown Twin Falls. Art graciously donated his half of the winnings back to the club. Thank you, Art, for your generosity.



The “Big Boy” display.

So, what are all the sizes of model railroads?



When the Crossing Lights are Flashing....

When the crossing light by the caboose is flashing, someone is in the building running trains. Come on in and see what is going on. There is never an admission charge to watch the trains. We are here for the enjoyment of the Magic Valley communities. Who knows, you might find something interesting.



Track Maintenance

Keeping all the trains running requires attention to areas most of our visitors don't realize. No matter what layout, all track requires attention to keep the trains moving. Power for the motors in the locomotives comes from the rails. So, when dust from the outside drifts in or the buildup of oxidation from running the locomotives happens the locomotives slow down and even stop. That requires members to clean the tracks whether by hand or by running a track cleaning car around for a couple of hours. The job is open for newcomers.

The scenery on the layouts

So how is all the scenery built?

Some of it starts as plaster while other parts start as a block of foam. All of it ends with hours as a labor of love becoming mountains, streams and towns looking real.

People are amazed when they find out what a tree is made from or how that mountain was constructed. We at the Magic Valley Railroaders are very lucky to have a person who can see and then make it happen in scenery. Kathy Barnes our secretary, does just that. From a piece of foam to a finished mountain village backdrop is her art and talent. We have watched a piece of screen wire have plaster cloth or just plain plaster added and it looks sort of like a mountain. Then out comes the paint. She looks like the mad scientist who is mixing this and that and after several washes, the white plaster looks like the wall of the canyon north of town. But that isn't the end. Then come itzy bitsy pieces of colored foam, sand she picked up at American Falls and dead sage brush ends and now there are trees and rocks on the ledges. That looks great but no, not to the artist Kathy. The mountain has green on it so comes the bushes and trees, some made by Kathy. And then one final spray of cheap hair spray to keep all in place and WOW, it looks like a mountain and even has fire fighters or a mountain climber or a group of hobos sitting around a campfire cooking hot dogs. Okay, it may not be hot dogs. In any case, please come out and enjoy her artistry as you enjoy the trains chugging around her masterpieces.



Meet Clarence Kerley, HO Scale

Kerley as he is known around the club, joined initially in 1996. After a time in the Magic Valley Club, Kerley, who lives in Heyburn, developed a club in the Rupert area at the Minidoka County Museum. In 2019 he came back to the Magic Valley Club. Kerley is the primary coordinator for the HO scale. He also works the G scale. Kerley has a unique gift of understanding all the insides of locomotives and repairs just about anything that runs on track. He has installed many components in all sizes of locomotives to allow them to run on modern layouts and have sound. He has taken one G Scale locomotive and made two, one with sound. In 2020 he was the lead to completely rebuild the HO layout with parts of scenery coming from as far away as Green River, WY. In 2021, he and a team brought back the current N Scale from Canyon City, OR. In his private collection, Kerley has approximately 350 pieces of HO rolling stock along with 60 plus HO locomotives besides many scenery items.



Kerley putting final touches on the HO Railyard.

To join Kerley as a member of the Magic Valley Model Railroaders, you can go to our web site at www.mvmrr.com and click on "Application".

The Club exists both for the enjoyment of the hobby of model railroading by its members as a place to run trains and for providing service to the community by presenting the concepts of railroad history and operations in an educational and entertaining manner.

Magic Valley Model Railroaders is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is governed by by-laws. A copy of the by-laws is available on our web site. The building is appropriately located next to the railroad caboose. There are four model train scale layouts. Inside of the building is N, HO and O. Outside is the G scale.

Membership is based on the desire to be a part of the club. Being part of the club would include an active involvement in one or more of the scale areas.

*Don't own a train?
Come on out.*

You don't have to own a train to be a member. Our club has a limited number of trains you can run. Besides, not everyone who is a member runs trains. Some may build scenery or provide electronics support.



What's coming up?

Below is our calendar as of the day this newsletter was published.

Saturday, November 11 – Club Meeting at 11 and Open House from noon until 3, at the Fairgrounds.

Saturday, December 9 – Christmas Train Show from noon until 3, at the Fairgrounds. We will have cookies and hot chocolate. There will be a beverage Truck to purchase other refreshments.

We are attempting to open the doors to the public more often. Working with the fair staff, we will track activities going on at the fairgrounds and try to have volunteers available to run trains on the day of the event. To get updates as the calendar changes, email us that you would like to be added to our email list.

Want a special train visit? >>>

If you are a school, club or other organization and would like a special visit, please email us or call us.

If your group would like to come out at a time other than when we are normally open, please let us know. We will do our best to accommodate you. Send us an email at info@mvmmodelrailroaders.com telling us who you are, the date and time you would like to visit, how many would be visiting. In the case of youth groups, we expect the group to have sufficient adults to monitor the youth. Due to some of the volunteers living away, we ask at least ten people in a group and three days' notice for a visit.

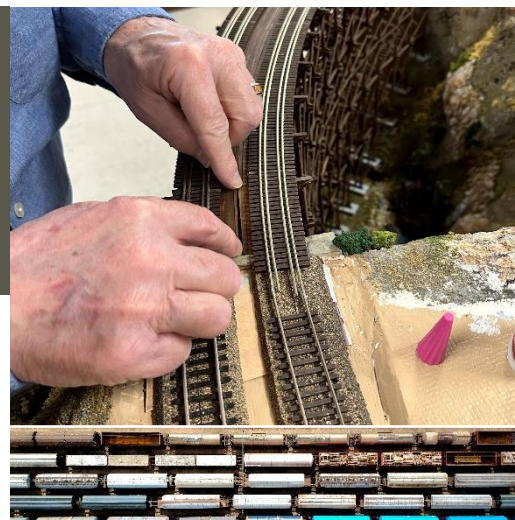


finalthoughts...

From Marvin Barnes, Editor, Magic Valley Model Railroaders

As we look back at the year culminating with the fair, we see we are truly blessed. Basically, a bunch of guys and gals who enjoy building scenery, laying track and putting together small models of locomotives and all types of rail cars that they pull. To be honest, for us model railroaders, doing all that needs to be done to get a train rolling round the mountain is what keeps us in good spirits. For us modelers, to push the number 2 buttons on a throttle and hear the sound of a steam whistle or air horn is like a great tee shot to a golfer. Our only problem is the desire of humans to build a mountain

or put together a consist of rolling stock is diminishing. We are looking for new members to join our merry group of builders, repair people and engineers to come and help keep this hobby alive. Hobby, did I say hobby? Let's clarify that. We have members who come out once a month, some who come out so much they know what is going on at the fairgrounds and other working folks who come as they can. It would be great to have a parent and child team running trains. What a way to have family time together and show off your hobby to the community. Blessings...



coming up>>>

In The Next Issue

Meet Gene Conley, HO Scale

The Christmas Train Show

Are the layouts taken down after the fair?

Current Projects



Club Officers

The club elected new officers at our October meeting.



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Randy Geisick
President



Marvin Barnes
Vice President



Jack Pretti
Treasurer



Kathy Barnes
Secretary

When the crossing lights are flashing, trains are running. Come on in!!

