

## The Great Train Exposition

By Dennis Peoples, Committee Chairman

This year's show was spectacular with lots of displays and vendors. I don't believe it was as big as last years World's Greatest Hobbies tour show but it was fun just the same.

Many of our society members turned out to set-up and run trains at the Great Train Exposition on February 15th (set-up) and February 16-17 (run trains). While it was not the most attractive set-up we have done in our history, it certainly was one of the largest. Probably covering about 2,400 sq. ft. of floor space, the layout was quite large. Long trains could be run on this layout. Times were set aside during the days to operate some of the member's live steam locomotives.

This year, for the very first time, I did not hear anyone say that they brought trains and were unable to run them. The difference being I used a dispatcher

(Jen Eckhardt) with a sign up time sheet, a very effective way to make sure everyone had their run time. My hat is off to Jen as she dispatched trains. The display set up was nice and there was lots of attention made when the warning bell went off and John Stiger's Bascule bridge did its lift; most impressive still. Not being too prodigious but our layout seems to draw quite the crowd.

Our members have quite an interesting array of equipment. I was very impressed with several engines; there was one in particular that I really enjoyed seeing run (steamer me). New members: Rick Severs' diesel and were those headlights bright; Nick Kelsey's sound system in the rail truck sounded really great as it cruised around the layout; Ron Bacon's collection with his Big Boy and 4449 just to name a few.

I really appreciate all the effort that everyone put in to make this a very fun event, next year will be even better. Thank you.



Nick Kelsey takes a break while Bill Dippert repairs a car that fell on the floor. Jean Dippert greeted interested people about garden railroads and passed out information.



Gordon Pisle and Joe Eckardt run the track power as David Linn and John Stiger look on



Ron Bacon rerails a passenger car



David Stratton and Leonard Merritt look after one of the rail yards

## My All Season Hobby

By Gary Lee, President

As I sit on the back porch and view our dormant, but soon to awaken garden, I can't help but feel eager and anxious to spend time outdoors fully immersed in my miniature 1/2 inch scale world — inspecting the right-of-way, operating turnouts, looking for lost parts and damage, pulling the scorned weed, filling the areas that settled from all the rain and snow from the storms of winter. It sounds like work, but it's really my solace, my reprieve. I derive great satisfaction and pleasure from creating and nourishing this miniature piece of the world. I suspect many of you do as well, but now the clouds are covering the sun's warmth and the reality that it is late February beckons me back inside to the warmth of the hearth.

In the winter I keep myself busy during the cold days and long nights with many great indoor projects — bridges to build, sections of track to fabricate, structures to build, kit bashing rolling stock and locomotives, all great projects. In the spring and summer I'm outdoors — gardening, landscaping, building right-of-way, running trains, sharing my creation with family, friends and fellow enthusiasts.

This is what makes garden railroading so appealing to me, it is truly my all season hobby.

Happy Rails!

**FYI:** I will host an all day clinic March 15 from 9:00am to 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Constructavision.  
4025 N. Williams Ave.  
Portland, OR 97227  
503-539-2143  
garylee@constructavision.com

**Topic:** 'Let's build your trestle'



We will fabricate bridge stringers (tops), straight, curved, and trestle bents, abutments, miscellaneous sway bracing.

This clinic will be a hands-on opportunity to build your own trestle. The first 10 people to sign up will

build a trestle up to 5 feet long, 2 feet high. Cost to be determined.

## Kit Bashing Project

### Converting a box car to a refrigerator car

By Gary Lee

My Baker and Grande Ronde RR needed a pair of refrigerator cars to handle the demand for fresh dairy and produce along its route. The problem is refrigerator cars are unavailable in 1:24 scale. I used Bachmann's advertised 20', 1:20.3 scale freight cars and found they scale out nicely to a 24' car in 1/2 inch scale and could be used on my circa 1880-1900 railroad.

I chose Bachmann box cars painted and lettered as Pennsylvania Dairy Products/Union Line as the car to kit bash. I removed most of the lettering, leaving only SYLVAN from the name Pennsylvania (the logo), and Dairy Products. Once this was complete, I disassembled the car removing trucks, couplers, under frame, roof and sliding doors.

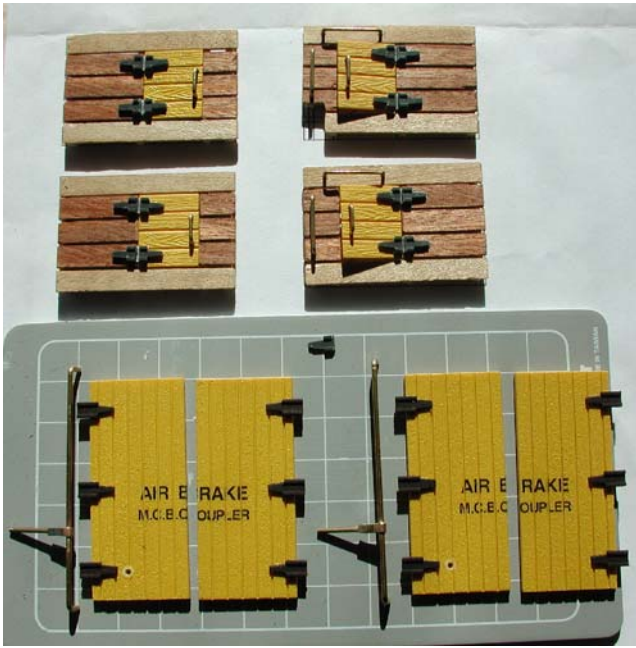
Using a template I drew as a guide, I built the ice hatch platforms from scrap stripwood and reused

the screw cover plates from under the car body as hatches for the ice compartments. I then added wire grab irons and handles as needed.

Next I fabricated new reefer side doors from existing sliding doors to fit the opening in the side of the car body. I fabricated hinges from PlastaStruct styrene using a jig I made to assure all hinges are equal in proportion. At this time I made additional hinges to be used later on the ice hatches to be installed on the roof. Using .0625-brass wire, I built the latch mechanism for the reefer side doors. Once the sub-assemblies were complete, I set them aside while I fabricated the roof ice hatch platforms.

After all the parts were made, it was time to assemble. First, I glued the hinges to the side doors and then glued the doors in place using scrap plastic as mending plates at the doorway openings. I drilled mounting holes to fit the new door latch mechanism I had fabricated earlier. I glued the ice hatch platforms in place using Krazy Glue, after pre-painting - using Floquil Tuscan Red to match the roof and car ends. Once this was done, all that remained was to complete the lettering scheme using dry letter transfers from Woodland Scenics.





I am pleased with the results and feel the cars have the look of “turn of the century” rolling stock I was trying to achieve.

## Doodlebugs

### Third in a Series

By Allan R. Warrior

### The EMC Motor Cars

In the 1920s, railroads recognized that steam loco-

motives were expensive to operate and maintain, particularly on lightly traveled branch lines and in switch yards. Because states were developing “all weather” automobile roads, passenger travel by rail began to decline. Many railroads had agreements with the various states and the Interstate Commerce Commission that forced them to operate some lines at a loss.

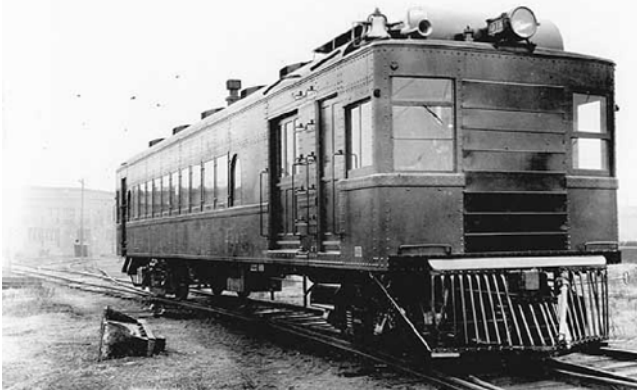
Various manufacturers designed motor cars and switch engines which were adopted by the railroads in hopes of cutting costs. Diesel engines were not yet powerful enough to challenge steam on the main lines.

EMC was not the first manufacturer of motor cars, but EMC was the most successful. Some of their motor cars ran until 1967. While EMC was the manufacturer of note, the car bodies were produced by the St. Louis Car Company, Brill, H.K. Porter, Buda-Edwards, and the Pullman Company.

The CB&Q had a population of 55 EMC motor cars out of a total of 66. Many of their motor cars operated on mainline service as well as branch lines. Their last motor car, No. 9735, was retired in 1967.



EMC Motorcar No. 1 purchased and tested by the Chicago Great Western in 1924



EMC Car, Serial Number 31, built in 1925

The ATSF (or Santa Fe) had a large population of motor cars. They ordered EMC motor cars beginning in 1927 beginning with M.108 and M.109. The M.110 motor car was purchased from Brill. The remainder of the motor cars through the M.190 were purchased from EMC. (Motor Car M.190 was known as the “ultimate doodlebug” and will be described next month.)

Many of the motor cars were first designed to use gasoline in their motors. When the price of gasoline began to rise past 14 cents per gallon, many of the engines were modified to use distillate. Distillate tended to burn with as much enthusiasm as a pile of wet chicken feathers. Distillate engines required four spark plugs per cylinder fired in sequence by a double-dual distributor. The spark plugs had to be supplied with a voltage of 70,000 volts compared to the 40,000 volts normally used by a gasoline motor.

A former bus and truck salesman, Harold Hamilton, thought he knew just what the railroads needed; *a better motor car*. He rented an office, had some letter heads printed and called his new company the Electro-Motive Corporation of Cleveland, Ohio. Hamilton contracted everything out. The Winton Engine Company supplied the distillate engines, GE supplied the controls and electrical components, and the St. Louis Car Co. built the car body. In 1924, Hamilton persuaded the Chicago Great Western to purchase and test the prototype car. The CGW was skeptical and stipulated that the car must run 30 days of continuous and de-

pendable service or the deal was off. While primitive by today’s standards, the car performed wonderfully, and operated at a respectable four miles to the gallon. The EMC motor cars were originally manufactured between 1922 and 1932.

The use of distillate was not a happy choice. Since it did not burn well, distillate tended to blow by the piston rings and quickly and seriously dilute the crankcase oil and causing increased wear on the lubricated surfaces. More frequent oil changes were required. Sometimes the distillate would cause detonation in the combustion chambers and damage valves, pistons, and heads.

Many of the motors were converted or ordered for gasoline. At this time, 40 octane gasoline was often the norm and names such as “Phillips 66” designated the octane of the premium gasoline.

As diesel motors became more developed, many motor cars were converted with more unhappy results. It takes several years to develop a reliable diesel motor. The best and most reliable conversions were often either Winton or Caterpillar motors.

### Wants and Available

**Don Golgert** is looking for 332 brass track and switches if someone has excess to sell.

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**Nick Kelsey:** Due to the need to finance a recent addition to the motive power fleet and space needed in the garage, I am going to be putting the following items up for sale on the web, but thought I would see if anyone locally was interested and save some packing and shipping. I am always open to reasonable offers!



Two Bachmann V dump hoppers, black #92504  
On the track for less than an hour. \$18 each



Bachmann Spectrum 81899 GE 45 ton side rod diesel loco, never been out of the box! \$75



LGB track 13000 30 degree crossings brass. I bought these used, in good shape, I have not used them, there are 4 available. \$45 each



Aristocraft Steam Loco Slopeback Tender with sound #21900 never made it outside! \$45

Nick Kelsey  
 kelsey.nick@gmail.com  
 (H)503-266-1110  
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## RCGRS Officers and Staff

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## Schedules & Timetables

Make sure you check the calendar on our Website at <http://www.rcgrs.com/> for the most up-to-date schedules and timetables.

It is the current Society's policy to attempt to have an event or open house on every second Saturday of the month. Other and additional dates during a month are also available and encouraged. Anyone interested in having an Open House or sponsoring an event, please contact **Christina Britain**.

**March 15, 2008, Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.:** "How to build a trestle" class; Gary Lee at Constructavision in Portland, OR.

**Where:** Constructavision.  
4025 N. Williams Ave.  
Portland, OR 97227  
503-539-2143  
[garylee@constructavision.com](mailto:garylee@constructavision.com)

**April 12, 2007, Saturday, 1 to 5 p.m.:** Open house at Dave and Margaret Kooken's, 7542 Carolina Lane, Vancouver, WA 98664; 360-695-0389 or [dmkooken@pacifier.com](mailto:dmkooken@pacifier.com). The Kookens will serve dessert, bread and coffee. Pot Luck: A to G main dish, H to M side dish, N to T salad, V to Z snacks.

Directions to the Kooken's:

From I-5 go east on Highway 14 or from 205 go west on Hwy. 14 to exit #4. Go north on Lieser Road (up a hill) to a blinker light at the top of the hill. Turn left for one short block on Macarthur. Turn right onto Miami Way which ends at the Kookens. Be cautious as some of the intersections have no stop signs.

**April 28 through May 4, 2008:** National Garden Railway Convention in Chandler, AZ. Approximately 50 garden railroads in the Phoenix-Tucson area will be open for touring. There will also be clinics and presentations, live steam tracks, and the many vendors and manufacturers present.

Email: [registration@ngrc2008.org](mailto:registration@ngrc2008.org)  
WEB site: [www.ngrc2008.org](http://www.ngrc2008.org)

**May 17, 2008, Saturday:** Open house at Ron & Merlene Bacon's, 31262 SW Laurelview Road, Hillsboro, OR. 503-628-2300, [mbacon@centricata.com](mailto:m Bacon@centricata.com)

**June 14, 2008, Saturday:** Harvey & Arlyn Becker, 2497 NW Todds Crest Dr., Bend, OR. 541-383-1864

**June 21, 2008, Saturday, "Railroads in The Garden", RCGRS summer tour.** Bill Derville is chairman for the tour. It is expected that there will be at least eight railroads open to the public tour this summer. The tour books will still be \$10 per family (or carload) and are expected to be available by May 20th at the same hobby shops and garden centers as last year. In addition to the hosts/hostesses for the garden railroads open for the tour, usually 3 or 4 helpers are needed for each site to help run the trains and for crowd control. You are all needed to help with this event.

**July 12 or 13, 2008:** Bill & Brenda Derville, 930 NW 170 Place, Portland, OR. 503-645-1771, [bderville@generaltool.com](mailto:bderville@generaltool.com)

**August 9 or 10, 2008:** Dr. John Stiger, 15195 SE Thornton Dr., Milwaukie, OR. 503-653-9767, [johnstiger@comcast.net](mailto:johnstiger@comcast.net)

**August 24, 2008, Sunday:** Open house at Judith Hinnimon's, 4770 SW 98th, Beaverton, OR 503-646-1288

**September 13, 2008, Saturday:** Jeff and Dianne Lange, 5220 NW Cherry Street, Vancouver, WA. 360-696-0799, [jeffdlange@comcast.net](mailto:jeffdlange@comcast.net)

**October 25, 2008, Saturday:** Annual Ghost Train Event. Plan now to decorate a car or locomotive (or train) with a ghoulish delight. Make sure your design will pass through a typical bridge or tunnel. The railroad is track powered. Open house at Bill and Jean Dippert's; 2650 NW Robinia Lane, Portland, OR 97229. 503-646-9783, [bandjdippert@zcloud.net](mailto:bandjdippert@zcloud.net).

**December 2008, Friday:** The day will depend on the schedule of the Christmas ships. Jan & Rae Zweerts are hosting an open house. Their houseboat is at Jantzen Beach, The Christmas ships will be sailing past their house that same evening. Jan's European railroad which is on a floating deck next to the houseboat will be in operation.

**Editor's Note: The deadline for the April 2008 newsletter is March 25, 2008.**