



# **THE FIRST STATE MODEL RAILROAD CLUB, INC. NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2016**

## **NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting of The First State Model Railroad Club, Inc. will be held on Tuesday, February 9, 2016, at 7:30 P.M. at Jarrell Station at 1282 McKee Road, in Dover, DE.

## **MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT:**

I would like to thank everyone for their participation in our discussion of where the club should be in five years from now. I learned a lot from hearing what everyone had to say. We still have a lot to discuss as far as a foundation of our club. Things I would like to see is an outreach program or a give back to the community program. Maybe helping a veteran's group, an old folk's home or some other organization within the community. This is something I think we need to do plus it would get our name known within the community.

February is going to be a busy month: this Saturday February 6th we are going to the Timonium Train Show. Anyone wishing to go should be at the station house at 7 a.m. and we will carpool from there; of course as always we will stop and have breakfast on the way over. Also we will be going to the Wilmington Train Show on February 20th and 21st at the Chase Center. We will be setting up our DCC layout for that weekend. We need as many people as we can to help set up on Saturday and take down on Sunday. I will let you know the time that we will be leaving the club house when we decide what time that will be. We will also be setting up at Smyrna High School for "I Love Smyrna School District Day" on Saturday, February 27. More help will be needed for this event. We picked up one new member and one prospective member last month, Robert Murphy and Todd Dolkos. Say Hi to them and let's all make them feel welcome.

I would like to thank everyone for the help and understanding and helping me get things done within the club. The club is not only a place to run trains and learn about trains but is a lot of friendships there where we get to sit and talk, tell jokes and enjoy each other's company.

There's so much that this club has done in the past and so much more we need to do in the future. I hope we can all work together and get things done. But like I have heard said in the past the name of the hobby is fun. So let's keep that in mind as we go forward in any undertaking that we take on. Again thank you for all your help in the past and in the future.

**SAM EATON, PRESIDENT**

## FSMRRRC NEWS:

**Website:** As stated in last month's newsletter our club's website is now up and running. Our web address is [www.fsmrrc.org](http://www.fsmrrc.org) and everyone is encouraged to check it out. The site is becoming quite popular; for example during the fourth week in January we had over 130 unique visitors with over 310 page views! We are adding new content all the time so if you have not visited the site recently you may want to drop by to discover what's new. I would like to thank Jeff Shockley for creating the Boy Scout Railroading Merit Badge section. It is quite comprehensive and should help Boy Scouts sign up for this wonderful program.

One of the new features that was recently added is the "Members Only" section. By now, every club member should have received an invitation to join the "Members Only" section of the website. If you have not received your invitation or are having problems logging in, please contact Henry Kramer at [fsmrrc@gmail.com](mailto:fsmrrc@gmail.com) and he will be glad to help.

We are in need of additional layout pictures. If you would like to have pictures of your layout displayed on our website please send your pictures to Henry and he will be glad to post them. Finally, if you have any suggestions on how to improve our site please let Henry know.

**Activity Proposal for the FSMRRRC:** Like many model railroading enthusiasts most of my hobby experience has been working alone, perfecting my skills through trial & error. As a result, I have a great deal of experience and skills in some areas of the hobby and am totally ignorant about other areas of the hobby. Like many in our club, I am looking for new and better ways to improve my existing skills and to learn new modeling skills; that is why I joined the club.

The Agricultural Museum project will soon be complete and several members have asked "what's next"? Past club ventures have usually been driven by the need to complete a project by a certain date (eg: the DCC modules and the Agricultural Museum project) and have usually been solo efforts. This has left out many club members who are not confident in their skills. I am proposing that the objective of our next major club project is to expose club members to different aspects of our hobby and to help them develop their skills by building several Operations-based modules.

Let me stress that the objective of this proposal is very different from past club projects. Building modules is the result of the objective and not the objective itself. This would be an "open ended" project and does not have a completion date. Because of this, no matter how the modules are built or how many are eventually created there would be no effect on existing club operations.

**Funding:** In order to avoid the "private property" issue when the time comes to actually apply our skills and build a module, I would request that the club authorize funds for Richard to initially build two lightweight (DCC type) modules as well as two "connecting angles". Other materials used for this project would be funded by the participating members.

The first two possible skill areas to be addressed:

- What is Operations?
  - What is FreeMo?
    - Standards and Operations
  - How do you design a GREAT Operations layout?
  - Freelance vs. historical track plans
- Laying out and wiring track
  - Type of track (100-83-75 Code)

- Turnouts
  - Manufacturers: Peco, Atlas, Others (pros and cons)
  - Electrofrog vs. Insulfrog
  - Sizes: #6, #4 – pros and cons
  - Throwing Switches: manual vs. electrical
- Hand laying track
- Ballasting track: Types, glue vs. paint
- How to wire a DCC layout
  - Wire gauge
  - Power districts
  - Reverse loops
  - Accessories
  - Connecting wire: solder vs. clip
- Structures
- Landscaping
- Rolling Stock
- Locomotives
- Maintenance

**DCC Expansion Project Update:** We have finally started committing our concepts and ideas to wood. Frames for four modules have been constructed and wired. One of these modules will be a “Y” off the main line leading to a yard. This module will be “reversible” (can be turned around so as to exit to either the inside or outside of the main line oval) and when turned inward would not take up so much additional space as to require the elimination of the DC layout. The other three modules will be the start of a yard that can be used for classification/switching as well as staging for trains entering and leaving the main line.

Although the track plan for the “Y” module is basically fixed, the yard models are still in the planning phase. Currently, the most popular plan is to base our yard loosely on the Edgemoor yard in Wilmington. Several months ago Dr. Jarrell loaned us a picture of Edgemoor taken sometime around the 1950-1960 range (the picture is hanging in our meeting room) and shows both electric and steam engines, as well as a turntable and a roundhouse. Many of the buildings shown in the picture are still standing and, although the turntable is gone, its outline is clearly visible in Google Earth.

During the planning phase we agreed on four “Guiding Principles” that should be incorporated into our plans. These were:

- Make it interesting for public viewing
- Make it kid friendly. Push buttons that make things move (ie: crossing gates, lights, etc.)
- Make it fun for the club members to build and operate (ie: car switching, etc.)
- Transportable for shows
- 

Although we are in the process of meeting these goals we could use your help and ideas on how to improve our designs. We would like to invite the entire membership to participate in the project. If you would like to participate please drop by during our Thursday night work sessions.

**Henry Kramer**

## **MORE NEWS:**

After our highly successful Christmas party the FSMRRC had several work sessions over the holidays. At our January meeting we decided on a field trip to the NMRA meet at Haddon Township, New Jersey. Seven members attended this activity which included a small sell and swap activity featuring books, structures, locos and rolling stock followed by presentations on various aspects of model railroading. Two of the most interesting presentations were a structure symposium by Nick and Nora Designs and a demonstration of the latest techniques for taking rolling pictures of layouts utilizing the latest generation of minicams. Both of these presenters have expressed an interest in coming down to our clubhouse to share their craft with our membership. This will be something for us to look forward to in the near future! After the meet we visited the Yankee Dabbler shop that was located nearby and saw a very impressive club layout before heading home. More of these excursions to Philadelphia and South Jersey NMRA activities are planned for the future.

Our next activity was our annual trip to the Amherst Society Train Show in Springfield, MA which was attended by seven individuals with the ladies making their usual pilgrimage to the Yankee Candle Shop in South Deerfield. Although this was a smaller group than usual the trip was very successful thanks to Paul Roy's meticulous planning and organizing. The weather was the best we've ever experienced in that location and our Saturday meal at the Steaming Tender in Palmer was punctuated by no less than four major train movements including the Boston section of AMTRAK'S Shoreline Limited. At the show the merchandise was pretty much as always and Ken Silvestry of Broadway Limited Imports told me he missed having his usual conference with Les Souder about what they should do next. I tried to fill in the gap by recommending that they bring out a Southern Pacific version of their generic consolidation with a Vandy Tender. They told me they would think about it for some time in the "distant" future.

So, what are we looking at for February? Well, there's the Timonium Train Show coming up during the weekend of the 6th and 7th. We will have to move fast on this one to get an expedition going. Perhaps we can plan it Thursday evening at the upcoming work session. At the end of the month we will be setting up at the Greenberg Train Show at the Chase Center in Wilmington. We are confirmed for that show and will be in our usual spot near the South access door. I am also keeping my eye open for the Smyrna High School Appreciation Day activity but our informant, Paul Buckley, states that there is no firm date yet. This show doesn't pay but it's local and a possible source of new members. (EDITOR'S NOTE: The date of 2/27 has been confirmed for this event.) We will discuss participation at our next business meeting on February 9th.

Finally, we have embarked on the initial stages of our Next Five Years Plan (i.e. where do we want to be five years from now?). A planning committee has been formed under the leadership of Kevin Herrmann and Les Souder. They will be discussing various options

and projects. If you have suggestions or ideas let them know about them. Better yet join in and participate in this activity.

### **Jim Valle, Past President**

#### **NEW MEMBER:**

Please welcome new member: Robert Murphy (Wife - Ann Marie), 283 Charlies Court, Felton, Delaware 19943, (H) [302- 284-2947](tel:302-284-2947), email - [rpmurphy638@msn.com](mailto:rpmurphy638@msn.com)

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**February 6-7, 2016 – Great Scale Model Train Show.** Maryland State Fair 2200 York Rd., Timonium, MD. Saturday: 9am-5pm, Sunday: 10am – 4pm. Admission: Saturday: \$9.00, good for both days, Sunday: \$8.00, kids under 15, FREE when accompanied by a paid adult.

**February 7, 2016 – The Toms River Train & Toy Show.** Elks Lodge 1875, 600 Washington Street, Toms River, NJ. 9am – 2pm. Admission: \$5.00, children Under 10 FREE.

**February 20-21, 2016 – Greenberg’s Great Train & Toy Show.** Chase Center on the Riverfront, 815 Justison Street, Wilmington, DE. 10am-4pm. Free Parking. Admission: \$7.00, kids 11 and under are admitted free and do NOT need a ticket.

**February 27, 2016 – “I Love Smyrna School District Day” starting at 8 a.m. FSMRRC set-up. Shore Line Garden Railroad Club will also set up.**

**February 27, 2016 – Seaford Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. Toy and Train Show.** Seaford Volunteer Fire Co., 302 E. King Street, Seaford, DE, 9am – 3pm. Admission: \$7.00.

**February 27-28, 2016 – Allentown Train Meet Spring Thaw™ Show.** Allentown Fairgrounds, Agricultural Hall (Agri-Plex), 302 North 17th Street, Allentown, PA. Admission: \$8.00, kids 12 and under are FREE!

**March 6, 2016 – The Brick Train Show.** Brick Elks Lodge #2151, 2491 Hooper Avenue, Brick NJ, 9am – 4pm. Admission: \$ 6.00, children under 10 Free. Children and adult door prizes, operating layouts, fine refreshments served from show opening until close, test track to operate that new purchase, train doctor.

**March 6, 2016 – Jersey Central Chapter of the NRHS (JCRHS) Train Show at Mother Seton High School.** Valley Road at the Clark traffic circle, Exit 135 on the

Garden State Parkway, Clark, NJ. Admission: \$5.00 for adults, kids under 12 FREE, family maximum \$10.00. Operating train layouts including one that the kids can actually run, railroad movies, a collection of model circus train equipment. Door prizes every hour with the Grand Prize an HO scale model train set. Parking is FREE.

**March 12-13, 2016 – Greenberg’s Great Train & Toy Show.** New Jersey Expo Center, 97 Sunfield Avenue, Edison, NJ, 10am-4pm. Free parking. Admission: \$9.00, kids 11 and under are admitted free and do NOT need a ticket.

**March 25-26, 2016 – East Coast Large Scale Train Show.** York Expo Center - Utz Arena, 334 Carlisle Ave, York, PA. Friday: 9am – 6pm; Saturday: 9am – 4pm; Admission: Two-day Adult ticket: \$18.00, children under 12 FREE, One-day Adult Ticket: \$10.00, children under 12 FREE. **NEWSFLASH:** Due to popular requests, we are adding **O GAUGE TRAINS** to the Large Scale List. We are letting O Gauge dealers buy space at this open-to-the-public show.

**April 3, 2016 – National Collectors Club Presents the Montvale Train and Toy Show,** St., Joseph High School, Chestnut Ridge Road, Montvale, NJ. 9am – 3pm. Admission: \$7.00, children under 10 FREE.

**April 9-10, 2016 – Great Scale Model Train Show,** Maryland State Fair 2200 York Rd., Timonium, MD. Saturday: 9am-5pm, Sunday: 10am – 4pm. Admission: Saturday: \$9.00, good for both days, Sunday: \$8.00, kids under 15, FREE when accompanied by a paid adult.

**April 23, 2016 – Boy Scout Railroading Merit Badge Class, hosted by the First State Model Railroad Club,** 1282 McKee Road, Dover, DE. 9am – 3pm. Admission: Free. Contact 302-423-2912 or 302-653-8096 for questions or to register. To register online, go to [www.fsmrrc.org](http://www.fsmrrc.org), click on “Up Coming Events” and follow the “Boy Scout Merit Badge” link.

**April 24, 2016 – The Toms River Train & Toy Show.** Elks Lodge 1875, 600 Washington Street, Toms River, NJ, 9am – 2pm. Admission: \$5.00, children Under 10 FREE.

**Do you have something you would like to share with the members of FSMRRC? If so, please submit them to [stockslager@gmail.com](mailto:stockslager@gmail.com) by the end of each month.**