

WAY FREIGHT

1ST QUARTER - 2024

EST. 1985



LITTLE GREEN CABOOSE
GETTING HELP BUILDING YOUR FIRST PIECE OF EQUIPMENT

A DESERT OPERATIONS MEET
BOX CARS, PASSENGERS, AND MOTIVE POWER IN ARIZONA

OCME GP 9 BUILD STORY
ENGINE NO. 324 HAS ARRIVED AT GOATHILL



COVER: Chase Dupre poses for a photo with his Galloping Goose on the Mountain Division.
 ABOVE: Dave Smith, Glen Swain, Gianni Gigliotti, and Kenny Matassa service Club Engine No. 596 on a recent work day.

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1. DENOTES A TERM EXPIRING AT THE END OF 2024
2. DENOTES A TERM EXPIRING AT THE END OF 2025

APPOINTED POSITIONS

BETTY CUMMINGS

MACKEREL FLATS & GOATHILL MERCANTILE STORE

HANK CASTIGNETTI

CITY LIAISON

**ZACH JONES, PATRICK LEDBETTER,
JOSH GUESMAN**

WAY FREIGHT

WAY FREIGHT

1ST QUARTER 2024 (JAN, FEB, MAR)

EST. 1985



Photo Credit: Gabrielle Salgado: Seth Taylor pilots Ben Viola's F-Unit no. 228C past Mehren Water Tower on a public run day.

A NEW LOOK

Hello, OCME members and fellow live steamers. We're absolutely delighted that you could join us for another year of the Way Freight.

Right now, we bet you're already confused on why it's taken so long for a new Way Freight to come out. So we'd like to explain our quick philosophy for 2024.

With consideration for how much time and effort it takes to put together the Way Freight, we're going to try and produce it quarterly, instead of monthly. We feel this will allow us to tell better stories, gather more information about the club over a three month period, and put out the highest quality magazine we possibly can.

And that's right, we said magazine. The other change we're implementing is that the Way Freight will morph into a magazine that harkens back to the old Model Railroader or Live Steamer days. We want fun projects, interesting articles, and all the details about the train club we can possibly fit in.

So we ask for your patience, your understanding, and your open-mindedness as we embark on the resurrection of your Way Freight. - Editorial Staff

OCME CALENDAR

April

- 6 Workday, General Meeting, Board Meeting
- 20 Public Run Day
- 21 Public Run Day
- 26 **OCME Spring Meet Starts**
- 28 **OCME Spring Meet Ends**

May

- 4 Workday, General Meeting, Board Meeting
- 11 **Knott's Steam Train Visit**
- 18 Public Run Day
- 19 Public Run Day
- 24 **LALS Spring Meet Starts**
- 27 **LALS Spring Meet Ends**

June

- 1 Workday, General Meeting, Board Meeting
- 15 OCME Public Run Day
- 16 OCME Public Run Day
- 16 Father's Day

BOARD MEMBER MESSAGES

DENNIS NEIL PRESIDENT

Our club membership is growing. We keep adding new and younger members, which helps ensure our club's future. Please keep up the excellent work of talking to people. Many have joined because members speak to them on the run weekend and at birthday parties. With summer upon us, many people take well-deserved vacations, so please support the club on workdays and run weekends if you can.

The Spring Meet is from April 26th to the 28th. Josh Guesman is the committee chair, with assistance from Dalton "DJ" Johnson, Mike August, Rich Barrientos, Steve Collier, Zach Jones, and Adam Dupre. Don't hesitate to contact any of the committee members if you would like to assist. See our website for details.

OCME is expecting the delivery of a new engine from Titan Trains soon. Keep an eye out for our new GP9 #324, which will be painted black and orange like the Rio Grand Railroad. We expect this to be an excellent addition to our livery.

Our layout is in the best shape it has been in a very long time. Some sections in Platfoot and Skinner yards still need work, but the mainline and most sidings are in excellent condition. A huge Thank You to everyone who

[Continued on Page 6](#)

JOSH GUESMAN VP OPERATIONS

Hello Everyone! I hope your year is off to a great start.

I just wanted to take this time and space to thank you for all the dedication you've shown to this club. There's a real energy behind everything we do right now, and I hope that momentum carries us into our first meet of 2024 -- OCME Spring Meet.

We revamped a lot of the offerings for the 2023 Fall Meet and we're going to build on some of that for the Spring Meet. So plan on joining us for the event at the end of April (26-28th) and be ready to lend a hand during the meet to help us serve meals and take care of our guests.

On a separate note, Ben Viola is also offering up a pretty rare opportunity for us. He's invited us to take a tour of the Knott's Berry Farm steam shop. For many of us who have grown up with theme parks and trains, this will be an exciting addition and a great field trip to our spring offerings. We'll have all the details on the member pages of the website, and we'll send out emails very soon.

I'd also like to shout-out the tremendous amount of work we've been accomplishing on work days. We need

[Continued on Page 6](#)

Continued from pg. 5 (Dennis Neil)

has contributed to the effort of replacing 5+ miles of track, rebuilding the 96-foot Hank Hornsveld trestle, and maintaining the rest of our beautiful facility.

The number of riders on most of our run weekends is nearing 4,000 passengers. We can really use everyone's help in keeping as many trains running as efficiently as possible. The more people that participate, the easier it is for everyone. Don't forget the Birthday Parties. If you are available, let Larry Ogle or Josh Guesman know. They are always searching for crews to run trains for Birthday Parties.

Thank you, everyone, for helping to make OCME the friendly, welcoming organization it is.

Sincerely,

Dennis Neil
President
Orange County Model Engineers

Continued from pg. 5 (Josh Guesman)

as many hands as we can get to keep our railroad rolling. And I'd really like to step up our level prior to, and through the spring meet. The more we wow our visitors, the more cemented we become in the hobby. Our founding members gave us a such a great place to play with trains, I feel an obligation to see some of their dreams fulfilled at the railroad.

Finally, I'd like to talk about the future. We have so many wonderful projects ahead -- storage projects, track projects, beautification projects. We'll need to work with the City of Costa Mesa to get some of this accomplished, but because of the great relationship we have, I think we can get a lot of what we need.

I want to continue to improve the compound, our storage options, and our workshop areas.

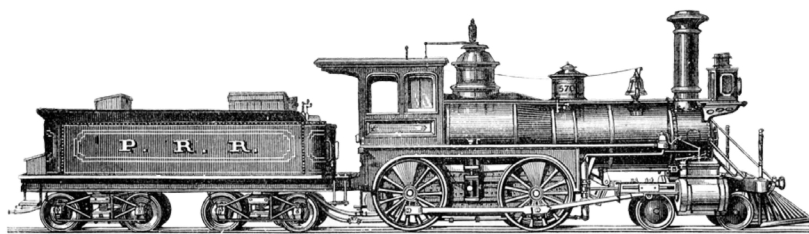
And if that helps grow our membership base, then I'm all for it. Getting our younger members involved is part of my personal mission statement. And seeing the kids out on the railroad is important in keeping our amazing club alive.

Once again, thank you for your dedication to the club, the time you've managed, and the projects you've accomplished.

I'm extremely proud and boastful of our train club. And hope we can continue to have fun on the layout.

Kindest Regards,

Josh Guesman
VP Operations
Orange County Model Engineers



AN AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVE.

THE TRAINYARD

WHAT ARE OCME MEMBERS WORKING ON? LET'S FIND OUT!

CRAB STEAM LOCOMOTIVE CONSTRUCTED BY GLENN SWAIN

Our first submission is from OCME Member Glenn Swain who has been a member since 2002.

Glenn is working on a 0-4-0 Crab, vertical boiler, steam engine. These types of engines can date back to the mid 1800's. He fills us in on his projet below:

--

This is the latest project I am working on, it is a Little Engines crab.

I just finished all the plumbing as you can see in pictures. Trying to figure out how to run it, bending it, and getting it to line up can be tricky. This engine also has an axle pump.

I am now starting to work on the riding car that will carry the water, propane tank, and me.

I still have to make a headlight and install the propane burner.

But it's almost ready for its first steam up and I hope I don't have any leaks.

However, all steamer's leak. -- Steam Forever, Swain.

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If you would like your project featured in the Way Freight, please send your information to Zach Jones.



PACIFIC COAST SHAY

CONSTRUCTED BY DAVE SMITH

Our next submission is from Dave Smith.

An OCME member since 2016, Dave is currently building a Pacific Coast Shay.

This type of Shay, first appearing in the 1920's, was popular with logging railroads in the Pacific Northwest of the United States with many considering this to be the peak of Shay technology.

If you've seen Dave's other Shay, then we know you'll want to follow this project to completion.

Dave fills us in on this exciting build below.

--

I have attached some photos that I have taken of the new Shay project.

The boiler I had made for me is the last work of Ed Perry. He had made the boiler for my present Shay. Ed will be sorely missed by the live steam hobby.

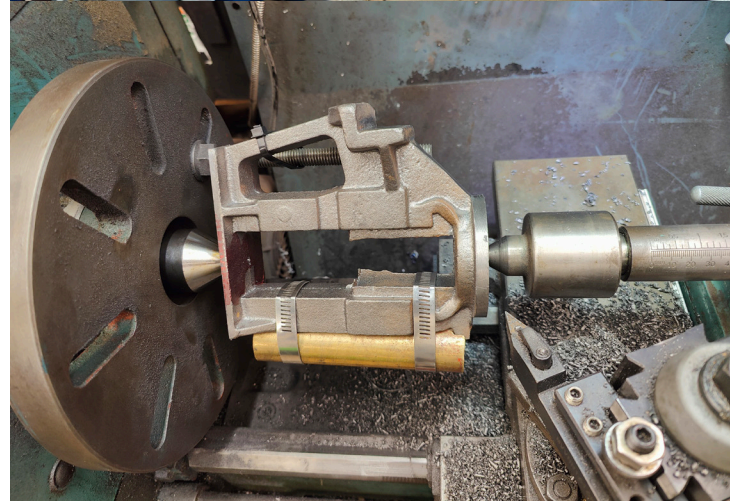
The manifold shot is of the partially machined base for the 3 cylinder engine and shows 24 tapped holes for the crossheads. The lathe photo shows one of the crossheads being turned between the centers with a brass balancing weight attached.

The two wheel castings show how much larger the loco will be.

I will be scaling this either as a 2" or 2 1/2" to the foot.

Thanks for your interest and I will be keeping you up to date as the project moves along.

David Smith



LITTLE ENGINES 0-6-0

CONSTRUCTED BY DECLAN HENRY



Our final submission for this quarter is from OCME Member Declan Henry (member since 2017).

Declan's Little Engines 0-6-0 ran at Bitter Creek Western near San Luis Obispo before he purchased the locomotive in 2020.

Declan explains below:

--

On this rendition of the engine, I installed the headlight, smokebox handrail, marker lamps, rebuilt the cab, installed brass trim around the pilot and running boards, and am reworking some of the plumbing.

The locomotive started out as a standard gauge 1/8th scale model, but I have been slowly narrow-gauging it to a 2.5-inch scale profile.

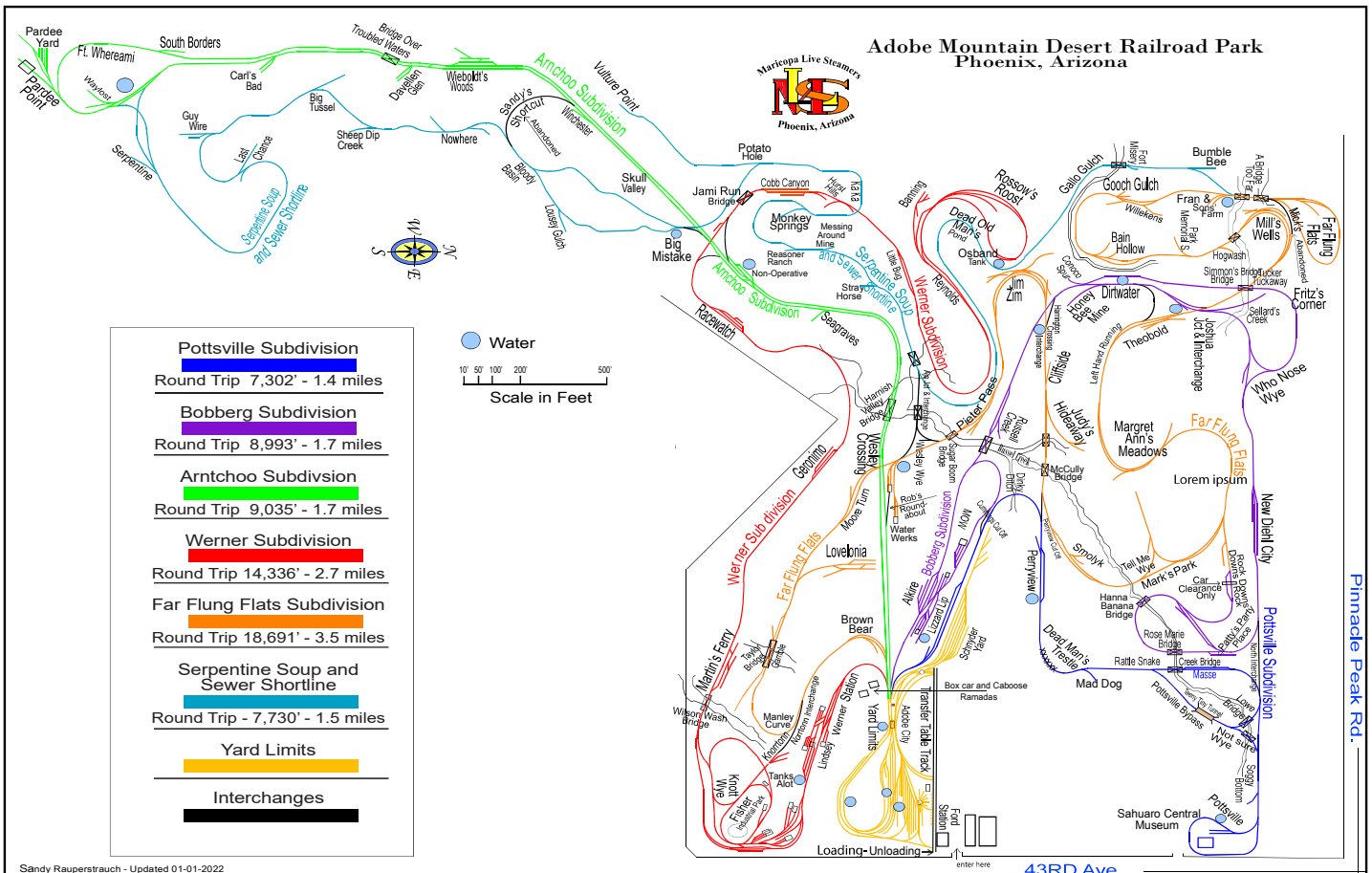


A DESERT OPERATIONS MEET

GLENDALE, Ariz. -- Hank Castignetti, OCME's City Liaison, sent in these wonderful photos from his trip to the Maricopa Live Steamers' Operations Meet in January. The MLS Ops Meet is one of the largest in the country, and trains from throughout the western US travel to Arizona to take part. MLS has over 17 miles of track filled with sidings, signals, and scale buildings.

Hank and fellow OCME member Andy Romer also visited the Sahuaro Central Shortline Railroad. The Sahuaro Central is a 15in gauge railroad located on the same property as MLS. Gary Gorman, an OCME member and former club president, serves as the president of Sahuaro Central. SCSR recently completed the first phase of their 15in gauge railroad and have begun providing train rides. Motive power is provided by a Hurlbut built 4-4-4 steam outline, and an unpowered trolley is used as the passenger car. Sahuaro Central also has a beautiful 4-4-0 American that they hope to restore to operation.

You can see a map of MLS's layout below and read on for a first-hand account from Andy and Hank.



From OCME Member Andrew Romer:

In mid-January, Hank Castignetti and I went to Phoenix to participate in Maricopa Live Steamers' 17th Winterfest, colloquially known as the "Operations Meet."

Having Hank as a traveling companion for the meet was excellent because he has attended a few of the previous meets, and I did not know what to expect. We took Hank's Boston and Maine gondola so that Hank would have a comfortable ride, and to put some "foreign road" miles on it. It's too bad that we didn't have another! The MLS riding cars are similar to those at OCME, and so are a bit uncomfortable for long rides. Fortunately, we were off the cars and on our feet a lot.

Our host was Gary Gorman, former president of OCME. He is active on the 15-inch gauge Sahuaro Central RR (adjacent to MLS) and as a fundraiser, he organized providing affordable lunches. So Hank and I worked in and around the kitchen for three days of



Right: Hank and Andy ride on a passenger service train during the Ops Meet.
Below: Andy, Gary Gorman, and Hank pose for a picture with the 15-inch gauge.



the meet, which yielded (I think) a lot of goodwill for OCME. There were nice comments about “The OCME guys.” They clearly had us confused with someone else!

We started by helping distribute cars around the layout on the Wednesday before the official meet commencement. But we spent a lot of time dealing with derailments. MLS has a lot of track -- a lot of track! And a lot of sidings. They have some track that is in very good condition, some that is operable but unknown condition (i.e. we did not derail but the ties were covered with ballast), some that was in poor condition (we derailed), and some that was visibly not in operable condition. It reminded me a little about OCME a decade ago before we started replacing track in earnest.

That evening there was an “All Attendees” meeting where registration packets were distributed, rules were discussed, and where operation of the switches was explained. We each got a customized booklet showing the timetable, track plan, line drawings of each of the divisions, and the rules.

Freight Operations consisted of taking groups of 5 cars to “industries” around the layout (humorous signs indicated their locations), and returning with 5 others. That is referred to as “Card Order” running, because each car had a card which showed where it was supposed to go. Many sidings were a long way from, and out-of-sight from, the designated stations. Finding these was quite an adventure and made for a fun part of completing operations.

As mentioned above, we spent a lot of time re-railing cars and locomotives.

When crewing on freight trains, the conductor had to keep track of the schedules, because there were also scheduled “passenger” trains, who had the right-of-way. We had to plan to be “in-the-clear” for them.

Hank and I spent one day crewing scheduled passenger trains, that had to stop at designated

stations, radio our start and departing times, and in general adhere to the schedule. Each division had a designated radio frequency, and we had to use it once when encountering a string of freight cars that were left unattended on the main.

I appreciated the work that Mick Janzen, Jim Zimmerman, and all the rest of the MLS meet organizers and volunteers put into making the meet interesting. They all did a great job. In particular I'd like to also mention the yardmasters and switch crews, and to Dakota Clemens and his predecessors who developed and maintain the truly impressive signal and electric switch machine systems.

An operations meet may be possible some day at OCME, but because we are not fenced, cars cannot be left on remote sidings overnight. Something to think about in the coming days and months.

Below: Hank Castignetti rides his Boston and Maine Gondola at the MLS Ops Meet in Glendale, AZ.



And I'd like to mention that Hank is a great traveling companion. We never ran out of things to talk about. The 300 mile drive went by in a flash – both ways. And when you think about it, a trip to Glendale, Arizona isn't some far away place. It's not a difficult drive. It's just a little off our normal beaten path.

I look forward to visiting them again in the future.

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From OCME City Liaison, Hank Castignetti:

My first trip to Maricopa for their Winterfest Operations Meet was with Mel Bresse in 2012. It was my first trip to a club other than LALS and my first opportunity to experience the camaraderie of playing trains with other foamers who were also OCME members.

In those eleven years, I've had the pleasure of joining Glenn Swain, Bob Platfoot, Larry Ogle, Terry Cummings, Mike Springer, Myron Peterson, and now Andy Romer. After a week on the road with them, you really get to know and appreciate your fellow club members. My fourteen hours with Andy on the road reminded me why I joined this club!

Since that first trip, I have attended six meets over eleven years with a myriad of traveling partners and a variety of motive power. Each visit to MLS was both familiar and welcoming, as well as filled with unexpected surprises. For example, the crew arrived one morning to find the entire train coated in thick frost. We resorted to using credit cards as snow-scrapers!

MLS offers six separate loop divisions (routes) built on acres of desert floodplain, sparsely sprinkled with native vegetation such as scrub brush, trees, and cactus, and littered with sidings and small yards. I learned something new with each visit.

Each time I visited MLS, I returned home with a longing for more track to cruise and operating



Above: A Denver & Rio Grande Western caboose no. 215 sits ready for use at Maricopa Live Steamers during their Winterfest / Operations Meet.

signals at OCME, tempered by an appreciation for our well-maintained track and variety of natural environments. Fewer derailments, acres of greenery, and wild animals soothes my layout envy!

If any of our OCME members have an opportunity to visit another club, DO IT! You'll surely be enamored with some of their unique amenities -- and they are all different -- but you'll ultimately come home with a new and positive perspective on Goathill Junction for its natural beauty, reliability, and member base. We have more fun!

The MLS January OPS Meet is a good place to start!

Editors Note: Thanks Andy and Hank for sharing your trip to MLS.

If members are interested in attending any of Maricopa's meets, please go to their website at maricopalivesteamers.com

TRACKING GOATHILL

CAPTURING THE EVER-EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF THE TRAIN CLUB



In February, OCME held a fire extinguisher demonstration with retired Fire Captain Dean Johnson.

Dean was kind enough to explain to the club members about what kind of fire extinguishers we could and should use for each type of fire. He answered other fire related question before allowing a handful of members to put out a small simulated fire.

Thanks for the educational demo, Dean!



Hank Castignetti refurbished our “Special Events” sign that members can place out at the main entrance to keep the general public out of the park during Birthday Parties, Meets, or other special events.

The sign can be found in the utility closet located at the train station.

It is requested that it be brought back to the closet when you are done using it.



Track replacement continues in Platfoot Yard under the watchful eye of Jeff Garrett and the track laying team.

Adam Dupre is seen here ballasting a section of just-replaced-track.

The OCME track crew is one of the best in SoCal. Capable of replacing large portions of track in a single work day.

Join them if you get a chance. (February Work Day)



In March, members of Cub Scout Pack 435 -- from Huntington Beach -- stopped by for a tour of the compound.

OCME members showed them around the compound where several engines had been pulled into the steaming bays. That included a myriad of steam engines from Dave Smith, Glenn Swain, and Kevin and Lori Tolan. Ben Viola also displayed his F-Unit.

The pack then got a ride around the layout pulled by two trains -- one of which we had them assemble.



Spearheaded by Hank Castignetti, the Board approved new bathroom floors in the train station. New epoxy flooring and new cove base was installed at the station bathrooms.

While doing the floors we also found one of our toilets was cracked and leaking. So that was replaced as well.

The pictures (to the left) show the before and after transformation that Hank accomplished.

The floors are now ready for another 15 years of use.

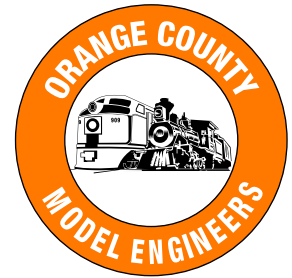


The club has installed a new sign that faces inside the parking lot. This sign was installed so that any member of the public who gets locked in, can call the number and get let out of the gate.

This will remove the responsibility from club members in having to track down people that have snuck into the parking lot to explore the park.

We would suggest a quick check to see if you can spot the owners of the vehicles before locking the gate.

RUN DAY RUNDOWN



The Mackerel Flats & Goathill Junction Railroad is one of the busiest, miniature, all-volunteer railroads in the world. Our 7.5-gauge track has been used by more than 550,000 riders since 2002 and our run days can see as many as 8 different trains in operation.

Orange County Model Engineers maintains nearly 5.5 miles of track on a 40 acre plot of Fairview Nature Park, in the City of Costa Mesa. Our 1.25 mile “public loop” takes anywhere between 12-15 minutes per ride, and most engines complete nearly 20 miles during the entire 5.5 hour run day.

You will find summaries of each run day with the weather, equipment, and volunteers who ran it. We’ll also detail the number of riders by day.

OCME RIDERSHIP DATA BY YEAR 2001-CURRENT

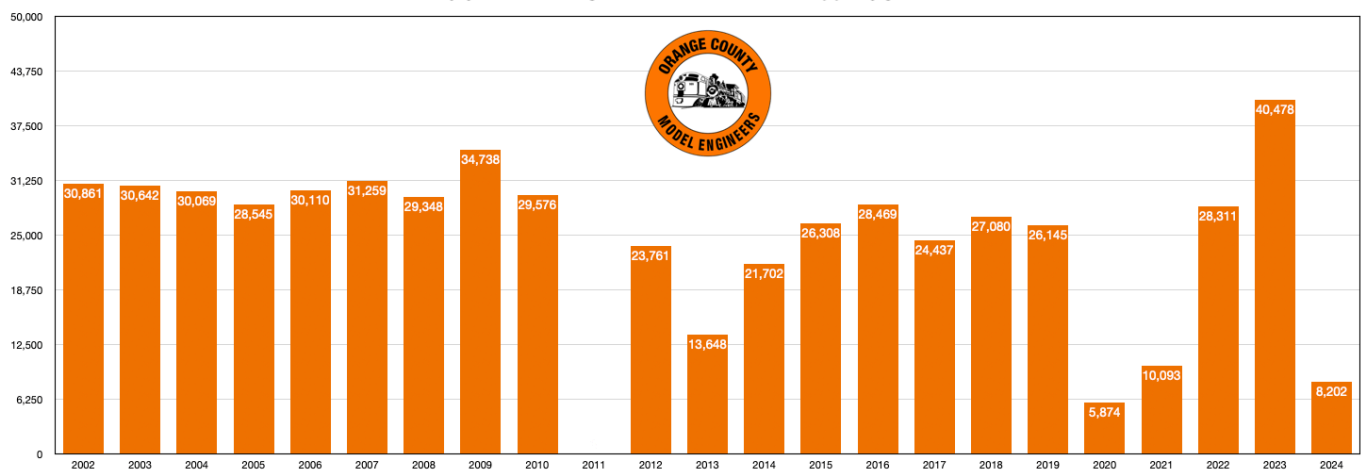


Photo Credit: Gabrielle Salgado: Ben Viola heads down Higgins on his F-Unit Locomotive no. 228C

JANUARY

1,262

SAT

1.20.24

SUN

1.21.24

WEATHER

RAIN

WEATHER

SUN

PASSENGERS

93

PASSENGERS

1,169

Rain-out on Saturday. Expected rain on Sunday but stayed dry.

Club locos running: 1104, 596, 819, 622

Member Locos Running: Allen Stephens Switcher, Ben Viola F-Unit

Recap: The rain started just about 30 minutes before we were set to open on Saturday morning. We got about three trains running through the wet weather before we shut it all down and went home.

Sunday was much better, but with the threat of rain, many didn't brave the weather. The club still did a great job and the layout was in really nice shape.

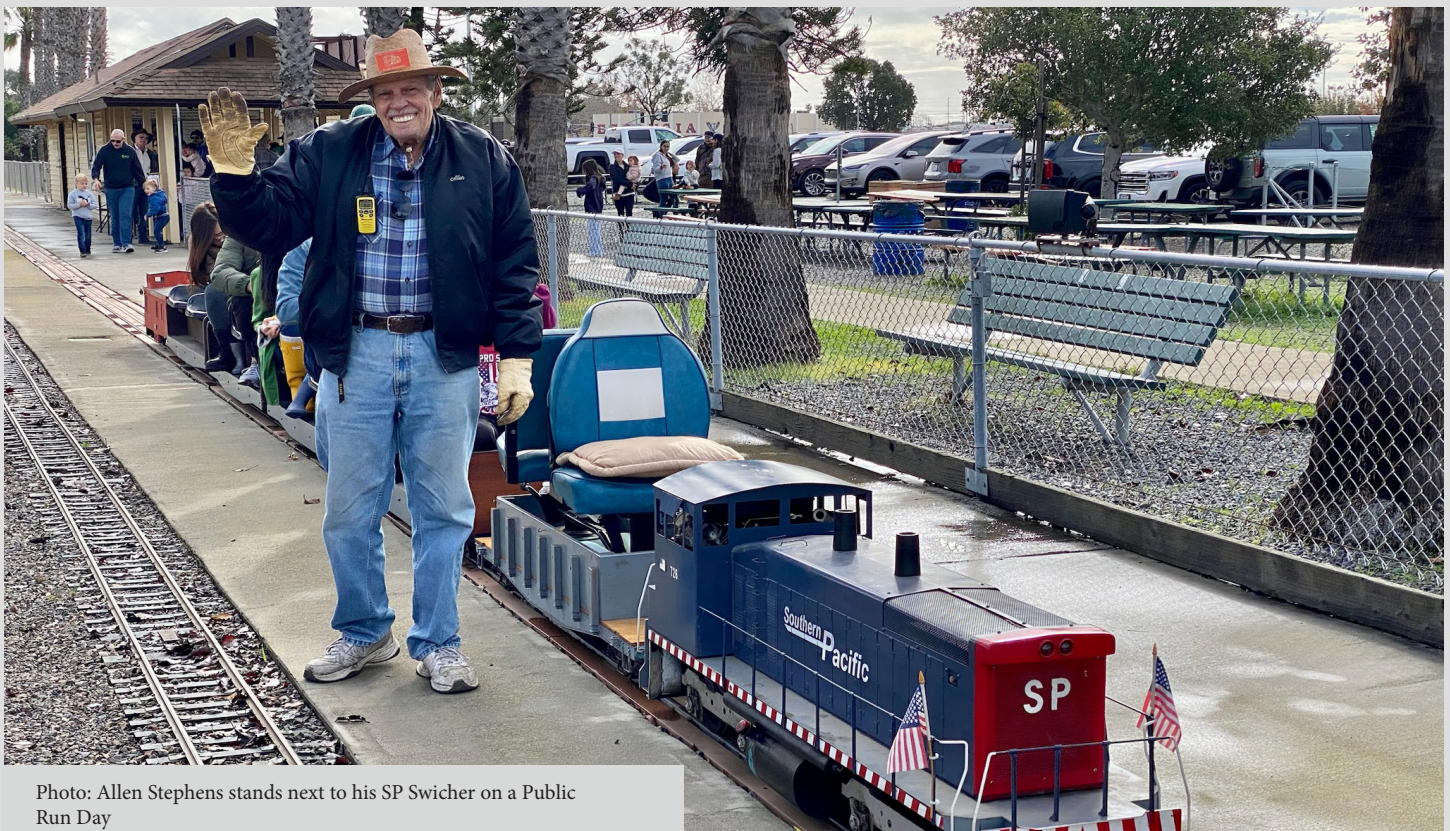


Photo: Allen Stephens stands next to his SP Switcher on a Public Run Day

FEBRUARY

3,549

SAT	2.17.24	SUN	2.18.24
WEATHER	CLOUDY	WEATHER	SUN
PASSENGERS	1,707	PASSENGERS	1,842

Cloudy with some sunshine on Saturday. Sunny with clouds Sunday
Club Locos Running: 1104, 596, 819, 622, 214

Member Locos Running: Allen Stephens Switcher, Ben Viola F-Unit,
Patrick Ledbetter's Beast, Willie Johnson's Tiffy-Marie

Recap: Saturday was cloudy but people really turned out. We had so many different engines and crews operating that the entire layout was filled with trains. The member locos really helped us get everything done as 1104 was pulled from service for repair.

Sunday the sun came out and we had a beautiful day of running trains.



Photo: Paul Hammond readies OCME Engine no. 596 at the station.

MARCH

3,391

SAT	3.16.24	SUN	3.17.24
WEATHER	MOSTLY SUN	WEATHER	SOME CLOUDS
PASSENGERS	1,594	PASSENGERS	1,797

Good weather for both days.

Club Locos Running: 1104, 596, 819, 622, 214

Member Locos Running: Ben Viola's F-Unit, DJ Johnson's SP Switcher, Patrick Ledbetter's SP Beast.

Recap: A great weekend for running trains. A lot of wildlife out on Saturday, but not as much on Sunday. Slightly lighter than normal crewing on Saturday. Good showing on Sunday.

Andy Romer was Station Master and did an outstanding job all weekend. Lines were manageable all day. Dropped off between 12:30 and 1:30.



Photo: Seth Taylor drives Ben Viola's no. 228C through the station on a run day.

RUN DAY VOLUNTEERS

JANUARY RUN DAY MEMBERS:

Betty Cummings*, Alex Gigliotti, Gionni Gigliotti, Mike August*, Jeff Garrett, Sue Garrett, Josh Guesman*, Dennis Neil*, Joshua Neil*, Larry Ogle*, Eric Engle*, Ben Viola*, Seth Taylor*, Aaron McCain, Allen Stephens*, Andrew McCune, Chris Johns, Terri Fuqua*, Glenn Swain, Lori Johnson, Zach Jones, Lori Tolan, Dalton Johnson, Steve Collier, Paul Hammond, Arun Ranjarajan, Pranav Rangarajan

FEBRUARY RUN DAY MEMBERS:

Steve Collier*, Hank Castignetti*, Mike August*, Dennis Neil*, Joshua Neil*, Larry Ogle*, Bob Brooks, Gradin Dodson, Jeff Garrett, Sue Garrett, Ken Matassa*, Rich Barrientos, Alex Gigliotti, Gionni Gigliotti, Andy Romer, Glenn Swain*, Terry Koken*, Anderson Ward, Allen Stephens*, Betty Cummings*, Mark Johnson, Lori Johnson*, Ben Viola*, Seth Taylor*, George Shearer*, Dalton Johnson*, Pranav Rangarajan*, Terri Fuqua*, Josh Guesman*, Dixon Sheldon, Stefanie Drake*, Willie Johnson, Paul Hammond*, Chris Johns*, Nick Hanrahan, Steve Hanrahan, Zach Jones*, Nelida Rojas-Platfoot

MARCH RUN DAY MEMBERS:

Anderson Ward, Chris Johns*, Dennis Neil*, Joshua Neil*, Terri Fuqua, Andy Romer*, Alex Gigliotti, Gionni Gigliotti, Larry Ogle, Paul Kabot*, Jeff Garrett, Sue Garrett, Steve Collier*, Mark Johnson, Louie Aguirre*, Betty Cummings*, Kathy Brokhausen*, Ken Matassa*, Josh Guesman*, Glenn Swain, Lori Johnson*, Dalton Johnson*, George Shearer*, Seth Taylor*, Ben Viola*, Pranav Rangarajan*, Steve Hanrahan, Nick Hanrahan, Zach Jones*, Mike August, Oliver Rexroad, Matt Rexroad, Noah Oshiro*, Mark Oshiro*, Eric Engle, Chris Cuthill, Andrew McCune



(Top) Steve Collier Engineers the No. 819 up Higgins. (Middle) Josh Guesman, controls "The Beast" with Mike August and Hank Castignetti. (Bottom) Seth Taylor drives Ben Viola's F-Unit No. 228C into the station.

(Top) Allen Stevens stands with his Southern Pacific Switcher. (Middle) Dalton "DJ" Johnson brings Club Engine no. 622 through the station. (Bottom) Club engines no. 622 and no. 214 sit at Goathill Jct. Station



Photo Courtesy of Titan Trains - OCME's new GP9 -- No. 324 -- sits in front of the Titan Trains Facility in Boones Mill, Virginia

OCME GETS A NEW ENGINE

THE TRAIN CLUB EMBARKED ON PURCHASING A NEW ENGINE FROM TITAN TRAINS. WE DOCUMENT THE BUILD PROCESS UP TO DELIVERY

COSTA MESA, Calif. -- In April of 2023 the Board of Directors started a discussion about the succession plan for some of the club's engines. At issues was what to do with the Chessie and how we add to our fleet of locomotives to help with all the club activities we do on a regular basis.

The load we put on club equipment is fairly unique in our hobby. We have one of the busiest public run days in the country from an all volunteer operation, and we do a tremendous amount of birthday parties and special events. And in order to maintain our unique position of offering club equipment for member use without the need to purchase expensive equipment, the board decided to continue with the sale of the Chessie -- a previous board had authorized its sale -- and purchase a new locomotive from Titan Trains.

The board, with the help of OCME member Patrick Ledbetter, asked for a quote from Titan for a GP-9 with a livery to be determined later. The GP-9 was selected for it's unique high-nosed look, it's ability to navigate our layout using four-wheeled trucks, and the fact that the club didn't have one. Variety is the spice of life, after all.

Titan laid out a plan that saw the club pocket a significant discount compared to list price, and the board authorized the purchase with a payment plan. Titan laid out a build schedule that would have the locomotive delivered around the end of 2023.

The board ordered the engine without a control car, but authorized the addition of the new handheld digital controller that Titan offers. It's an interesting technology that should help members of all ages to control the new engine with ease. Instead of using the traditional stick, it uses a dial and a control box to digitally control the engine RPM's and the overall speed of the locomotive. It's similar to the controls of an electric engine -- think a twist knob -- than that of a gasoline hydraulic.

The board also requested a Dead-Man's switch, lights, a bell, the new Titan quiet muffler, and other standard equipment on Titan Trains.

Patrick and the Board went through the list of wants and needs with Titan and settled on final pricing for everything including the to-be-determined paint job and full board approval was given on May 7th. The total discount received for this portion of the build was \$2,500.

At the June General Members Meeting, the board put forth livery candidates to the membership to vote

on. There were three choices for the new GP-9 livery -- Rio Grande Orange and Black Speed Lettering with Tiger Stripes, Santa Fe Black and White Zebra Stripes, and Union Pacific Yellow, Gray and Red.

In elimination voting -- the lowest vote getter in each round gets eliminated -- the eventual winner was the orange and black Rio Grande Speed lettering with tiger stripes on the high nose.

That decision was sent to Titan.

What followed was fairly regular communication on the status of the engine build. First came the gathering of parts and equipment. then the completion of the chassis.

In November of 2023, the board was considering a control car for the new engine and had discussions about getting a powered slug for the new GP9. The thought process behind the consideration was that we'd like to reduce the load on the engines as much as possible, and increase braking ability when pulling longer, heavier trains.



Photo Courtesy of Titan Trains - OCME Engine No. 324 under construction at Titan Trains in Boones Mill, Virginia

Price for a non powered slug would run the club at least \$2,000 and more than likely \$3,000 without any added benefit of a powered car.

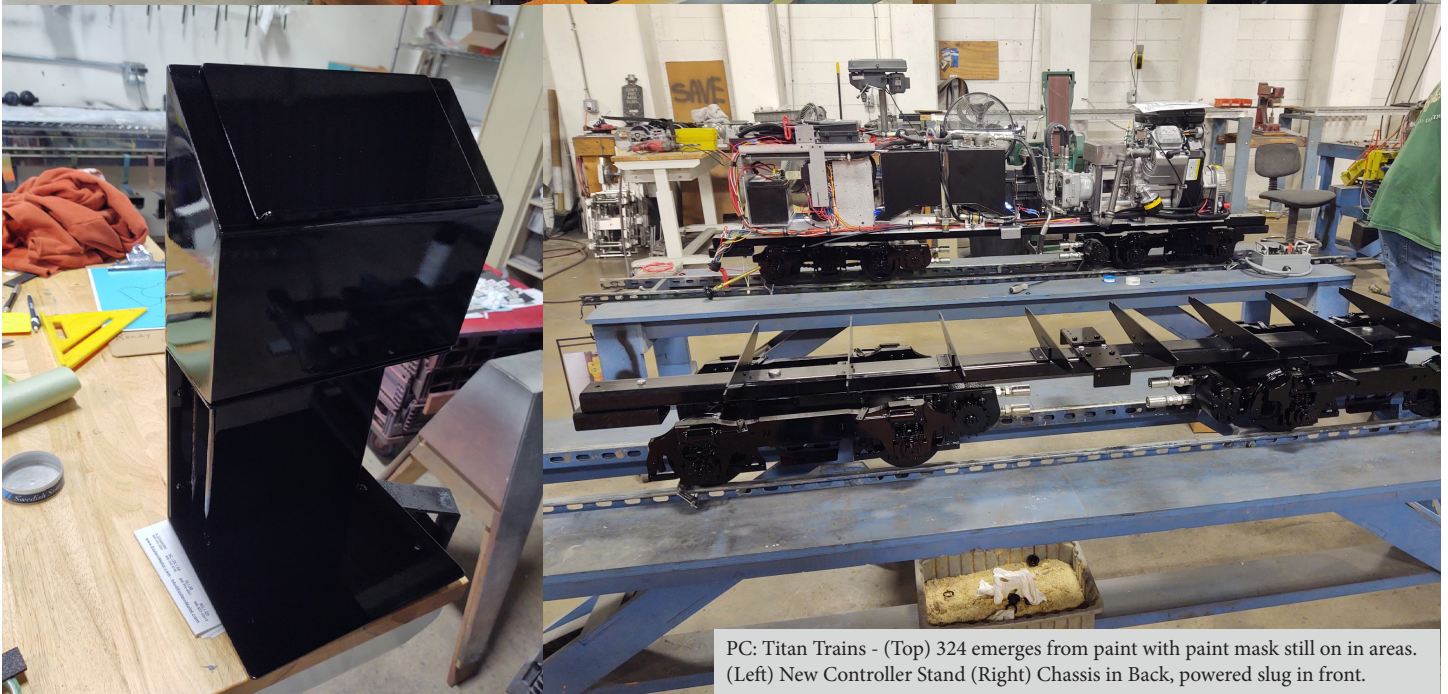
Titan approached us and offered to build us a powered control car similar to 1104 and 509's that would include a stand for the digital controller.

Titan can charge as much as \$11,500 for these types of cars. But with our paired down requirements we were able to secure a significant discount on the

control car.

While it would likely delay the delivery by a couple of months, the board was willing to make that sacrifice for a train that would fit the needs of our operations. Later in November we received pictures of the body and chassis completed without paint.

That was followed up in March with pictures of the painted control car and engine right after they emerged from the booth.



OCME GETS AN ENGINE - CONT.

In the middle of march we received pictures of the finished engine, complete with clear coat and in a ready-to-ship configuration.

Note: The board asked for the dead man's switch to be mounted on the side of the gray control box.

The engine and control car were then crated up and sent to a warehouse where they were picked up and transported to OCME.



GP9 COMPLETE:

In total the project was completed in less than 12 months for a total of \$28,798. Estimated savings of at least \$4,500.

We'd like to thank Titan Trains for their follow through on the project and to Patrick for his coordination between the club and Titan.

In a follow up article we will highlight the details of the engine and document it's introduction to the layout and it's first public run days.



PC: Titan Trains - (Top Right) Completed GP9 and powered control car. (Top Left) new digital controller. (Bottom) Engine and Control Car Chassis.

PICTURE PERFECT

THE BEST SHOTS FROM GOATHILL AND BEYOND
SEND US YOUR FAVORITE PICS FROM YOUR RAILROADING ADVENTURES



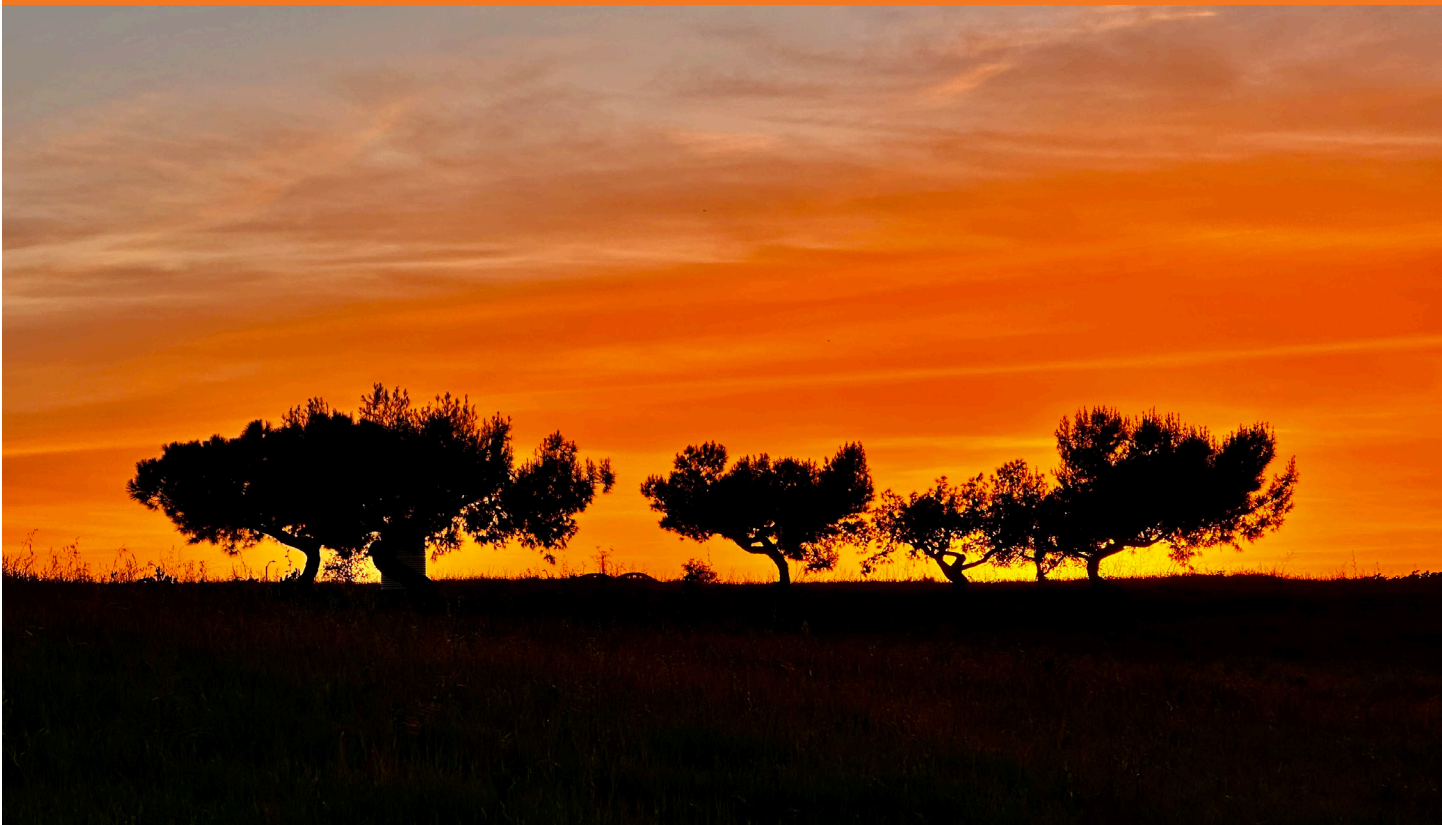
(Top) Photo Credit: OCME Member Paul Hammond - Paul stops to take a picture of his UP Switcher no. 253 as it traverses Dead Man's Trestle at Maricopa Live Steamers in March for their Spring Meet

We Want Your Photos!

Email your photos to info@ocmetrains.org

Tell us where you took the photo and what's in the photo. And it doesn't have to be
from the train club!

We can't wait to share your best shots each quarter!



(Top) Photo Credit: OCME Member Josh Guesman - Taken in March from the Mountain Division looking up at Merhen Yard during Sunset.
(Bottom) Photo Credit: Gabrielle Salgado - Taken During our run day in January, Seth Taylor pilots Ben Viola's No. 228C F-unit up Russ' Horseshoe



By Gabrielle Salgado
gabriellesalgado.wordpress.com

SAFETY POINT(S)

OCME SAFETY COORDINATOR, TERRY KOKEN, POINTS OUT THE POINTS ON OUR SWITCHES AT THE RAILROAD.

An Engineer has to know what the points on a switch are going to do to the path of his train. A few concepts in the engineer's training material need to be clarified before we lay this out.

A switch changes the lay of its points. We normally set the route on Run Day so that all trains follow the same overall route. But sometimes, the switches may be maliciously changed by kids (or adults) out to create mischief, and we must watch out for this. For birthday parties, we sometimes want to vary the route to give the birthday kid a special job to do and to show him and his friends the rest of the layout.

The direction of the train determines what the points you cross do.

Let's assume you are going forward for now. Then, we'll talk about going backward a little. As you go forward, when two tracks come together into one, you are moving with the points (also known as a trailing points movement). Here, the points don't make any difference – you're coming in on one of the two tracks, but there's only one way to go out, and that's the way you'll go, regardless of the way the switch is set. When one track that you're running on

splits into two tracks, though, you are moving against the points (also known as a facing points movement).

The way the points have been set by the switch will control which of the two tracks you come onto as you pass the switch. Look at the points as you approach them.

If the left one of the points is tight against the track, you will go right.

If the right one is tight against the track, you will go left.

If neither point is tight against the track, you will derail and will have to spend the next ten minutes re-railing your engine (This is called splitting the switch).

Moving with the points

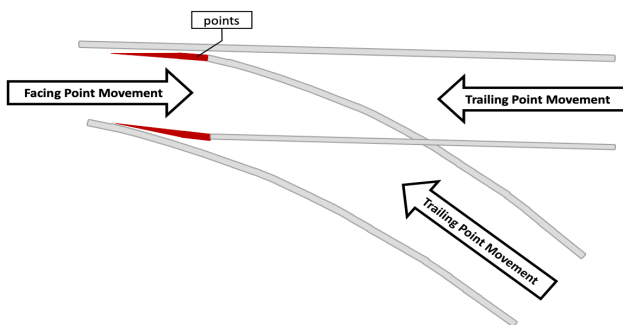
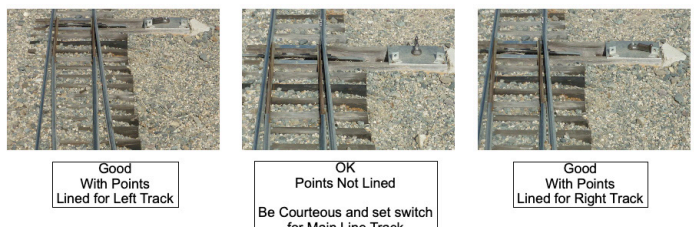
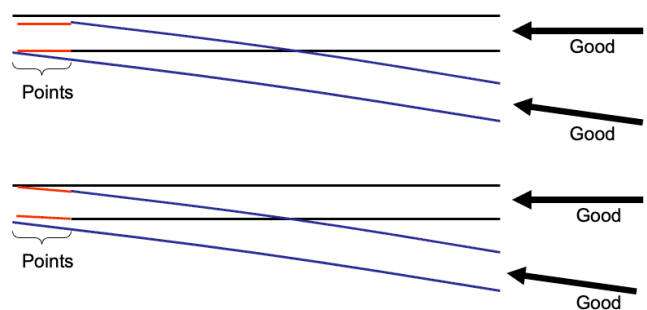


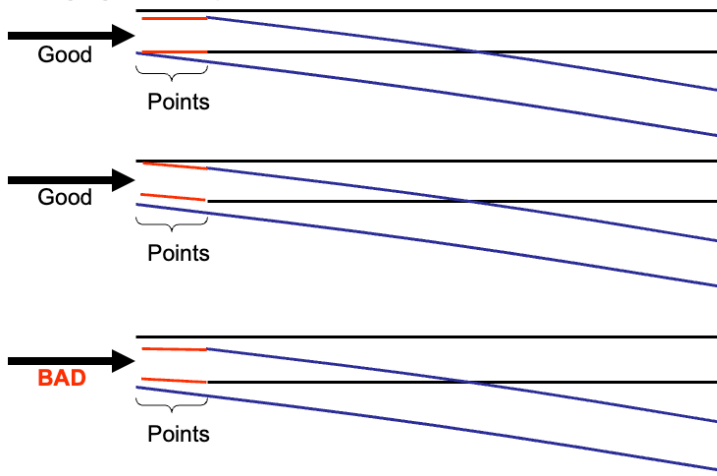
Figure 2. Facing point vs. trailing point movement

If you aren't looking at what is happening, you may put the whole train on its side, breaking legs and/or killing people. This is important since it could put the railroad out of business.

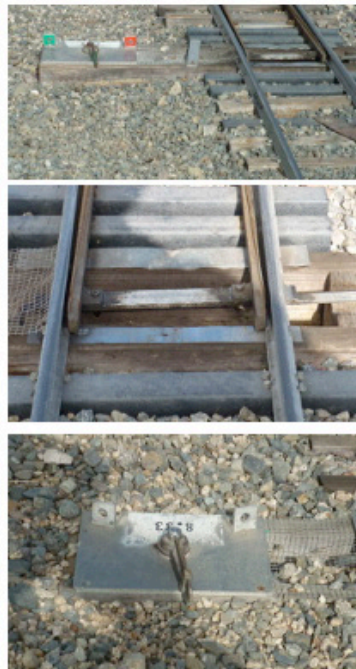
So, read those points!

If you're backing up, they're harder to read since you're farther away from them. You can get help from your conductor, but just as above, left tight means go right; right tight means go left.

- Moving against the points



Good
Against Points
Lined for Left Track



BAD
Against Points, Not Lined
Stop and Correct
Before Proceeding



Good
Against Points
Lined for Right Track

TRACK-WORK MINUTE

JEFF GARRETT TALKS ABOUT TRACK WORK AND WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THE GANDY DANCERS

First, I would like to thank everyone who participated in the track-work we accomplished so far this year. This includes laying new track, replacing old track, building and rebuilding switches, assembling track panels, the nasty job of taking old panels apart, and the constant maintenance required to level, grade, and re-ballast our existing roadbed.

Lately, our primary focus has been revitalizing the Platfoot yard, rebuilding the existing switches, and building and replacing track panels.

It has been great to see many of our newer members getting involved in this. It seems like one month a newbie catches on, and the next month, he's showing others how it's done.

All your efforts are appreciated since our layout requires continuous attention between weed control, earth movement, wildlife burrowing, and contraction and expansion of the rails. It is a constant vigil.

Speaking of which, did you know that on a typical day when there is a 20-degree change in temperature, aluminum rail will expand and contract 1/32 of an inch for each ten-foot track panel? Steel rail is about half that amount.

That's why we stick those pennies between the panels and why our layout is truly "alive."

Here's another fun fact: People who lay track on the railroad are often referred to as "gandy dancers." This is because railroad workers used a "gandy" bar—a five-foot bar made by the Gandy company—as a lever to position the rail.

In Mexico, they're often referred to as "traqueros."

Again, thank you so much for all the work you put into keeping our layout in amazing shape. We hope to see you at our next workday. And if you've never worked with any of the track crew, I invite you to join the "gandy dancers" and the "traqueros."

You'll be teaching others how to do it in absolutely no time!

OCME VP of Facilities, Mike August works on track in Platfoot Yard during a recent work day.



A G-SCALE HOLIDAY LAYOUT

**ROGERS GARDEN IS A HOLIDAY DESTINATION FOR KIDS OF EVERY AGE.
WHAT DID THEIR G-SCALE LAYOUT LOOK LIKE IN 2023?**

Did you have a toy train navigating its way around the Christmas tree when you were growing up? It seems like a fairly common gateway to our hobby and one of those communal shared experiences.

Whether at a department store window, a theme park, or around your own garden -- trains are always around during that special time of year.

After all, we don't call it "Train Season" for no reason!

But for members of the Orange County Garden Railroad Society, it's their job to bring that holiday feel to Rogers Gardens for their G-scale Garden Layout.

OCME member Terry Koken met with Lynne Worley of the Orange County Garden Railroad Society who sent in these photos of OCGRS's holiday display at Rogers Garden.

The Garden Railway Society's G-scale layout consisted of two loops with one raised on a higher level than the other. A large curved trestle carried the upper track over the lower one, and several smaller bridges carried the railroad over small earthworks.

A collection of miniature trees and colorful flowers completed the scene.

The OCGRS certainly produced a beautiful railroad, and we're looking forward to seeing what they have in store for Christmas 2024!



You can find the Orange County Garden Railroad Society at orangecountygardenrailwaysociety.com

2024 CALENDAR

CHECK OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING AT
THE CLUB IN 2024.

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY
EVENTS AND DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

APRIL

04/01/2024 Cesar Chavez Day (State Holiday)
04/06/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting
04/20/2024 Saturday Public Run Day
04/21/2024 Sunday Public Run Day
04/15/2024 Tax Day
04/22/2024 Earth Day/Passover
04/26/2024 OCME Spring Meet/Fun Run/ Chairperson Josh Guesman
04/27/2024 OCME Spring Meet/Fun Run
04/28/2024 OCME Spring Meet/Fun Run

MAY

05/04/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting
05/05/2024 Cinco de Mayo
05/11/2024 Knott's Berry Farm Steam Fieldtrip
05/12/2024 Mothers' Day
05/15/2024 Peace Officers Memorial Day
05/18/2024 Saturday Public Run Day/Kathy's Kids Corner-Dino Day
05/19/2024 Sunday Public Run Day/Kathy's Kids Corner-Dino Day
05/27/2024 Memorial Day (Federal Holiday)

JUNE

06/01/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting
06/15/2024 Saturday Public Run Day
06/16/2024 Sunday Public Run Day
06/16/2024 Father's Day
06/19/2024 Juneteenth (Federal Holiday)

JULY

07/04/2024 Independence Day (Federal Holiday)
07/04/2024 Independence Day Fun Run/Host Dalton Johnson
07/06/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting
07/20/2024 Saturday Public Run Day/Kathy's Kids Corner-Summer Fun
07/21/2024 Sunday Public Run Day/ Kathy's Kids Corner-Summer Fun

AUGUST

08/03/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting
08/17/2024 Saturday Public Run Day
08/18/2024 Sunday Public Run Day

SEPTEMBER

09/02/2024 Labor Day (Federal Holiday)
09/07/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting
09/21/2024 Saturday Public Run Day
09/22/2024 Sunday Public Run Day
09/27/2024 OCME Fall Meet / Fun Run
09/28/2024 OCME Fall Meet / Fun Run
09/29/2024 OCME Fall Meet / Fun Run
09/30/2024 Deadline For Submitting Nomination Papers For Election of Officers

OCTOBER

10/03/2024 Rosh Hashanah
10/05/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting
10/12/2024 Yom Kippur
10/14/2024 Indigenous Peoples Day (Federal Holiday)
10/15/2024 Election Ballots Are Mailed to Voting Members
10/19/2024 Saturday Public Run Day /Kathy's Kids Corner-Goat Hill Scary Wild West
10/20/2024 Sunday Public Run Day /Kathy's Kids Corner-Goat Hill Scary Wild West
10/31/2024 Halloween

NOVEMBER

11/02/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting
11/03/2024 Daylight Saving Time Ends
11/11/2024 Veteran's Day (Federal Holiday)
11/15/2024 Deadline For Submitting Election Ballots
11/16/2024 Saturday Public Run Day- Toys For Tots / Kathy's Kids Corner-Turkey Gobble
11/17/2024 Sunday Public Run Day- Toys For Tots / Kathy's Kids Corner-Turkey Gobble
11/28/2024 Thanksgiving Day (Federal Holiday)
11/29/2024 Turkey Fun Run

DECEMBER

12/07/2024 Work Day / Membership Meeting / Board Meeting / Election Ballots Counted
12/09/2024 Newport Beach Police Family Day
12/21/2024 Saturday Public Run Day / W/Santa & Mrs. Claus/Kathy's Kids Corner-Mrs. Jingles
12/22/2024 Sunday Public Run Day / W/Santa & Mrs. Claus/ Kathy's Kids Corner-Mrs. Jingles
12/25/2024 Christmas Day (Federal Holiday)
12/26/2024 First Day of Hanukkah
12/26/2024 Kwanzaa



GOATHILL MINING & LEISURE COMPANY - CABOOSE NO. 12219

JUNE 2023

LITTLE GREEN CABOOSE

JOSH GUESMAN EMBARKS ON BUILDING HIS FIRST TRAIN CAR SINCE JOINING THE HOBBY. HE DETAILS THE BUILD BELOW

COSTA MESA, Calif. -- There's a lie I told myself and my wife when I joined the train club. "The best part about it," I said, "was that the club owns its own equipment. They already have the engines and the passenger cars. So really, honey," I persuaded, "I won't need to buy my own stuff. At least not right away."

As the last words left my mouth both myself and my wonderful and amazing wife knew I was already in over my head. The gears were already turning and the thoughts of my own railroad empire were already being meticulously planned out -- and changed -- on a near weekly basis.

But whether it's HO, N, G or the larger scale we

model, pride in ownership is a real tangible thing. The thoughts of getting to share a creation I helped to bring about were almost too much to handle. And the detail by which I love to model seemed to find a new outlet in 1.5 scale. Everything was bigger. And in some ways, that gave my brain a chance to think bigger as well.

THE PROPOSAL:

If you hang around train people, you're going to find yourself in situations that open the door to you buying or constructing something.

For me, my gateway drug was OCME member

Patrick Ledbetter's Western "Bobber" Caboose. A non-prototypical freelance design of a toy box caboose that had standard four-wheeled trucks on it. So while it doesn't "bob" it has that same compact layout.

The size seemed approachable, the details Patrick had planned scratched the itch, and I could probably do some of the work myself.

The best part was that Patrick already had a second caboose laser cut from steel and it was basically just ready and waiting to be put together.

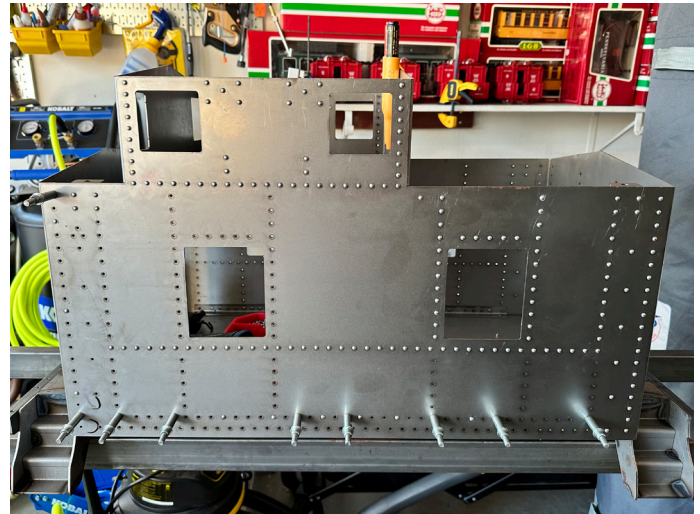
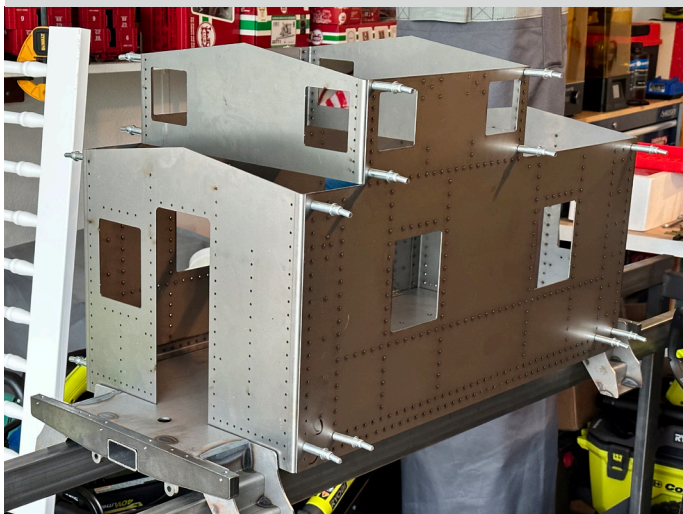
The price was more than reasonable as well -- he's got others to sell, if you're interested.

THE PLAN & CONSTRUCTION

Just mere days into agreeing to buy the caboose I was already in deep planning mode. Patrick had sent over the side profile of the caboose and I went about creating an art direction for it.

And the art itself would change several times. And one of the biggest reasons it would change is that fellow OCME member George Shearer had already commissioned Patrick on an twin sister to mine. So his color choices influenced mine. Basically, I wanted my caboose to look like mine and his to look like his and I didn't want them to be confused for each other.

Nearing completion of one side of the caboose. I ended up removing about 10-15 rivets after this was done to fix them. A learning process.



Installation of aluminum rivets. The start of the bad side. I learned a lot on this side.

The amazing thing is that thanks to little tweaks I added to the design -- things Patrick gleefully hopped on board -- and things George added, we upped the level of detail quite substantially.

I want full credit for opening and closing doors. And Patrick did want to kill me at least once as he tweaked the design for the operating doors.

George added an idea for some great window detail that you see on the final version. And without it, the caboose wouldn't have looked the same.

So with those tweaks completed, I told Patrick I wanted to rivet the caboose myself. He said "Absolutely!" He probably laughed himself to sleep that night knowing that I would be the one who put in the nearly 1,200 rivets (this number is an approximation. At one point I knew the exact number of rivets. But now that number gets bigger every time I tell that story).

Another major problem - I didn't know how to rivet. I was guided to the purchase of my first air hammer, given a brass buck-bar and sent on my way.

The first 30-percent of the caboose has some pretty bad riveting. I had to knock a lot of the little aluminum rivets off, re-drill the hole, and then do it again. Aluminum rivets are a great way to learn how to do this. They damage easily, so you have to be

precise, but if you screw up you can knock the head off with a chisel and start over again.

The remaining 70-percent of the rivets were a piece of cake and I got into a real solid pattern with proper air pressure, proper technique, and tons of experience on the first part of the caboose.

There are two different sized rivets on the caboose. There are shorter ones just for show, and longer ones that actually stitch the caboose together.

With the caboose body riveted together in my garage it was taken back to Patrick's to finish the assembly, place it on the frame -- that Patrick had already constructed -- and send it out for powder coating.

A GREEN CABOOSE?

Yes, my caboose is green. An no, it's not some crazy story as to why it got that way. It's just simply that George wanted a red caboose. And I wanted ours to be different. So what's the opposite of Red? Green!

Color chips were purchased, days of agonizing were undertaken and this particular green, "Pine Tree," was selected.

Patrick made the excellent suggestion that the black should be powder coated in a mini texture. And to me, it's what really sets off the green. The mini-tex looks more like a nonslip surface. Or perhaps it looks like painted steel a little more than the glossy color of the green.

Either way, the mini-tex is something I'd suggest for anyone going the powder coated route if you want a more realistic "scale" finish.

At this point, I decided to design the logo for my fake railroad and link it back to the club that I spent my childhood at. So the Goathill Mining Company was incorporated. But then I remembered that I wanted to haul passengers. So the "Leisure" part of it was added and we now have the Goathill Mining and Leisure Company.



Twin Sisters -- George Shearer's Caboose is next to mine in Patrick Ledbetter's garage. Can you tell the difference? Mine is on the right.

And if you're thinking that a mining company should probably be modeled in a narrow gauge scale, you are correct. But I started in 1.5 and that's where we'll stay for awhile.

My logo was sent to Miracle Graphics and with a few emails about different labels, I was sent a complete list of decals.

FINAL ASSEMBLY AND DETAILS

Patrick completed the final assembly, including putting on my swinging doors -- my son thanks him -- and got it ready for it's first run.

The Caboose was delivered to me on December 31st,



Deliver Day! December 31st, 2023 my little green caboose made it's way onto the lift and out onto the layout.



The Caboose, completely lettered and numbered now, makes it's first run day in February. No issues found with 11 hours of running over both days.

2023 and made it's debut on the layout about five minutes later.

She's heavy, tracks great, and I've had zero issues with it wanting to come off the track. The dual trucks seem to guide it through whatever the track has in store for it. And that includes when running in reverse.

But I took the Caboose home after that and started working on the decals. There were nervous moments, and I've come to hate the letter "T" but overall, there were no major hiccups. Except that once you're done with one side, you have to do the other. And for some reason, it almost feels like the second side is harder.

I then installed the acrylic windows I had Patrick cut for me on his laser cutter. I originally tried installing them with magnets. That was a bad idea. So double sided 3M automotive tape was used. So far, it holds up great.

Then I went about wiring in some LED lights. The LED's probably deserve their own article, and I'm not even close to be done with them. But I do have some

of them installed in a working configuration.

I have five interior overhead lights that I 3D printed in an industrial design I freelanced (you may have seen an article about that in a previous Way Freight). I also have the fantastic marker lights that Patrick sells, a custom designed FRED that Patrick came up with that we're testing out for a possible run of, and a potbelly stove that flickers with a fire effect.

All groups of lights can be individually switched.

Their run off a 12v Battery with a 1 amp mini fuse for protection.

I also 3D printed crates and barrels, and a conductor in 1.5 scale. It was the first time I ever attempted painting a figure before and the many years of watching Dave Meek over at Thunder Mesa Studio must have rubbed off.

My suggestion to anyone who wants to try painting figures is to not be afraid of acrylic paints and learn how to do washes to get the result you want. The depth of layers you can add with washes and dry

brushing is the only thing that allows my “conductor to approach believability.

And with that, I’m probably 90-percent done with the build and she can now operate without anyone knowing all the plans I still have.

FUTURE PLANS:

There are things I want to add to the build. And in case you haven’t noticed, I love details.

I’d still like to add a wooden planked floor. I want to add an overhead light on each porch possibly lighting up the number boards on the end of each caboose, and I’d like to layout some furniture and cabinetry on the interior.

I also want to 3D print some Bathroom and closet doors to hide the battery and Bluetooth speaker that I have installed inside the caboose.

With all of my modeling, I like to tell stories. So another figure or two inside the caboose would help for those that stop and look inside.

I’m currently scouring the Internet for 3D figure that would match my 1900’s to 1950’s time frame. I’m pretty flexible on that.

I also have two other train cars ready to add to the Goathill Mining & Leisure Company that are my next projects -- revert back to the beginning of this story and you already knew I was over my head.

I have to give the biggest thanks to Patrick for



Family Day: My wife and son went for a sunset ride. The lights are on -- you can see the overhead lights in the cupola.

guiding me through doing some work on this project. For someone that was always afraid to tackle complex projects as a kid, it's fun to not be scared of doing something as an adult. Patrick gave me the confidence to not be worried about screwing something up. It can most likely be fixed.

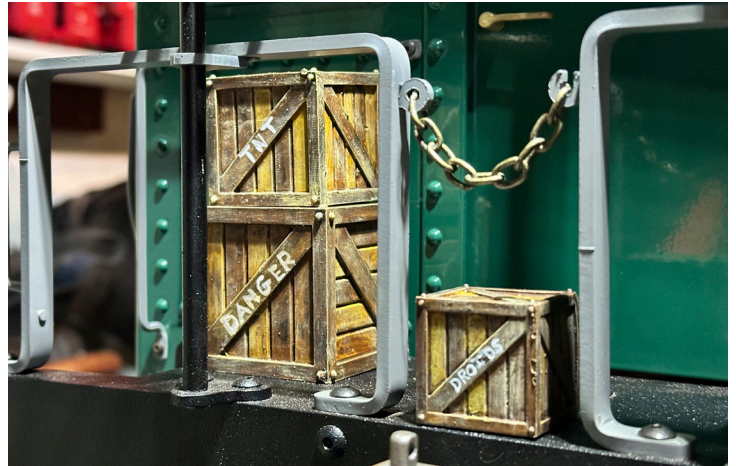
Also, in case you can't tell, Patrick did most of the heavy lifting on the project while I just assembled and finished things.

I'm sure this isn't as detailed as some would like. But this is nearly nine months of my life. If I really tried to recall every decision, we'd need an appendix to the Way Freight.

My only hope in talking about this process is that you will start that project you've been putting off.

We've all done that thing where we sit and stew over a portion of the project that we think is going to be hard. And then when you finally accomplish it, after thinking about it for 3 months, it takes you 20 minutes.

So get out and do it!



(Top) 3D printed Crates with custom paint. (Bottom Left) 3D Printed Conductor before painting. (Bottom Right) Painted Conductor

OCME SPRING MEET

FAIRVIEW PARK, COSTA MESA, CA



EVENT DATES

FRIDAY, APRIL 26

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

SUNDAY, APRIL 28



ocmetrains.org

SPRING MEET CALENDAR

FRIDAY, APRIL 26

GATES OPEN: 10 AM

VISITOR CHECK-IN: 10 AM to 7 PM

LUNCH: 12:30 PM - SANDWICHES

PIZZA & POTLUCK DINNER: 6:30 PM

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

GATES OPEN: 8 AM

VISITOR CHECK-IN: 8 AM to 8 PM

BREAKFAST: 9 AM

LUNCH ON THE GRILL: 12:30 PM

FIESTA DINNER (RSVP): 6:30 PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 28

GATES OPEN: 8 AM

VISITOR CHECK-IN: 8 AM to 5 PM

BREAKFAST: 9 AM

LUNCH ON THE GRILL: 12:30 PM

EVENT FINISH: 5 PM

VISITOR CHECK-IN:

VISITORS CAN CHECK-IN DURING THE ALLOTTED TIME. IF CHECKING IN OUTSIDE OF THAT TIME, PLEASE COORDINATE WITH JOSH (INFO@OCMETRAINS.ORG) FOR YOUR ARRIVAL AND ORIENTATION.



GP-9 & Riding Slug

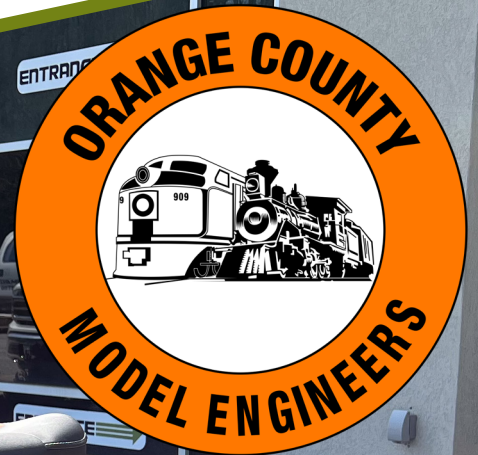


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WAY FREIGHT

OCMETRAINS.ORG



CLUB SP CABOOSE 259 SITS ON A SIDING AT OCME - CABOOSE BUILT BY RUSS GREEN

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