

PGRS TRACKIN'



The Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

March 2024

EDITOR'S GREETING

I hope everyone is enjoying leap year and especially the extra day we received last month. Have you ever wondered, what it takes to be a newsletter author, besides a PhD. Just kidding; if you can send an email, you can be a published author. Many articles spring from just a few words and a photo of a finished project or one in progress. So if you want to be the envy of the model railroading community, send me that email of your best effort or a photograph. As always, a special thank you to this month's contributors.



CLUB NEWS

Your club officers have been hard at work. TrainFest is set for April 13th at the Lutheridge Conference Center in Arden. Final details will be announced in the next newsletter. The Spring TrainFest will be an opportunity to discuss the election of club officers. Most of our current club officers have served six or more years. While all the positions are open for consideration, there is one confirmed board vacancy. We are looking

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SOCIETY WEB PAGE

WWW.PIEDMONTGARDENRAILWAY.ORG



CLUB NEWS Continued

for members who might be interested in serving on the Board as President, Secretary/Treasurer, or as a director. We are looking for Officers to bring to the club fresh ideas and guide the future of the club. We plan to elect the new club officers during the Fall TrainFest. We hope you consider serving as an Officer and use the time between now and the Fall TrainFest to talk with our current officers to see what each position entails. Don't forget that a challenge was issued to all our members to bring a project for the drag-n-brag portion of TrainFest.

There are several trains shows coming up. Mark your calendars for these:

March 22 - 23: Central Georgia RPM - Macon, GA

April 12: Bulls Gap TN train show

June 20 - 22: NMRA SER Convention - Decatur, AL

During the last train show at the NC AG Center, our PGRS booth was approached by a gentleman, Don Dessenberger, who is interested in selling his large scale trains and track. He has a WP&Y starter set by Bachmann and 70 feet of track, transformer, plus 4 turnouts. He can be reached at 828-696-6309 or harleyfan@aol.com, if interested.

I understand our PGRS booth also shared quite a bit of information on our club, which hopefully translates into new members.

As always, consider sharing this newsletter with friends who might be interested in our club and if they wish to become members ask them to contact our PGRS Secretary/Treasurer for a membership form or download a form from our website:

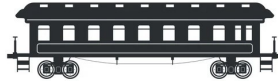
[Join Us – Piedmont Garden Railway Society](#)

Dues can be mailed to PGRS [Secretary/Treasurer](#) at:

Doc Watson
125 Mistletoe Trail
Hendersonville, NC 28791
docwatson@morrisbb.net

CLUB NEWS Continued

The Club's mission is to promote and to further the enjoyment of large scale model railroading among its members, their families and their guests as well as the public at large.



RAILROAD TRIVIA QUESTION

When were roof walks required to be removed from freight cars? The answer is found later in this newsletter.

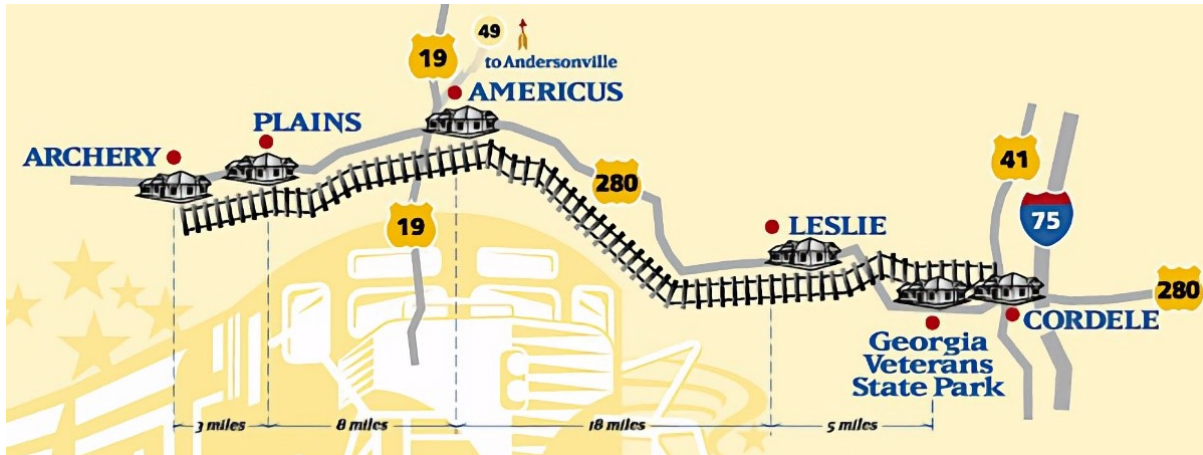
RAIL-FANNING PROTOTYPES TO INSPIRE A GARDEN RAILWAY PROJECT



The **SAM Shortline Railroad** operates seasonal excursion trains between Cordele and Archery, in southwest Georgia. The operation's name pays homage to the Savannah, Americus & Montgomery Railroad, formed in 1888 as a successor to the Americus, Preston & Lumpkin Railroad. The original SAM mainline between Savannah and Montgomery, Alabama, would later be absorbed into the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, until segments of the line were spun off by successors Seaboard System and CSX Transportation in the early and late 1980s. Today, excursion trains featuring a small fleet of postwar enclosed passenger cars are managed by the Southwest Georgia Railroad Excursion Authority. Freight shortline [Heart of Georgia Railroad](#) provides locomotives and operating crews. SAM Shortline offers a variety of trips throughout the year, with depot platforms in Cordele, the Georgia Veterans State Park, Leslie, Americus, Plains, and Archery. Trains cross scenic Lake Blackshear on an extended peninsula and

RAILFANNING— Continued

wooden trestle. The trainset is stored at the Georgia Veterans State Park depot when not in service. It's been a while since we were on this train ride, but the state park has a great campground plus an airpark for R/C model aircraft.



There are a variety of excursions posted on their website. The longest is from Cordele to Archery and back, which is a full day trip. (9:30am to 4:30pm)

All of the passenger cars are conditioned, such as the one below.



RAILFANNING— Continued

One unusual car is the power car. It is on the head end of the train and provides electrical power for all the passenger cars. The car was built in 1953 for the US Army and a US Army hospital kitchen car and was built by the St. Louis Railcar Company. The army then sold the car into private ownership via public auction. The private's owners then converted the car into a power car, installing two large Diesel generators. The SAM Shortline purchased the car in 2003 to power the train. In January 2022, the power car had an exterior restoration and painted into its original US Army Hospital Kitchen Car paint scheme.



THE BACKSHOP MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS

Fran sent in these shots of his new layout. He says this is what happens when you are too old to clean outdoor track.

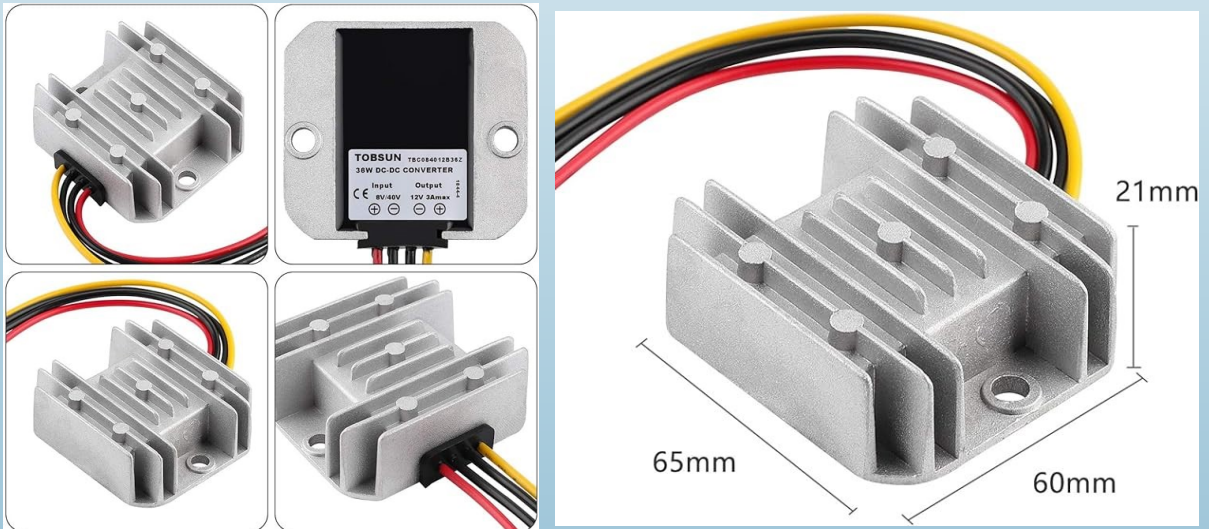


THE BACKSHOP
MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS
Continued

Some more thoughts on LED lighting

By: Wayne Hamilton

I was looking at my passenger car lighting and deciding on the best power source for the battery power. My loco's are using 14.8v and my LED's are 12v. I came across a small transformer on Amazon that would step down the input voltage to 12v. I'm not an electrical expert, so this setup just works for me.



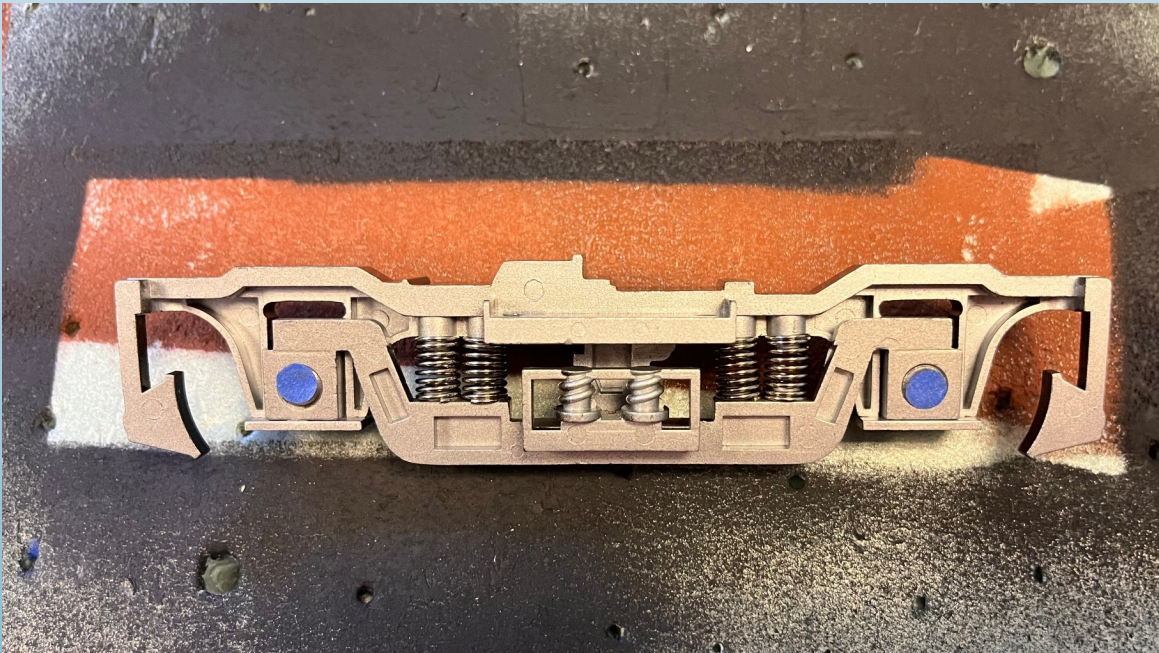
Also, I found an adapter kit for a DeWalt 20v battery with a switch.



THE BACKSHOP
MODELING PROJECTS AND TIPS
Continued

I have quite a number of 20v drill and saw batteries. Before anyone asks, I didn't use the 30amp fuses included with the kit. Since this setup is going in a baggage car, there will be easy access to change out the battery. The test of the completed system worked okay. Next month, I hope to have photos of the completed project.

I also repaint quite a bit of my stock models. One trick I use on the trucks to keep paint out of the wheel bearings is to use a hole punch on painter's tape. The little dots are then applied to the axel bearings as shown in the photo below.



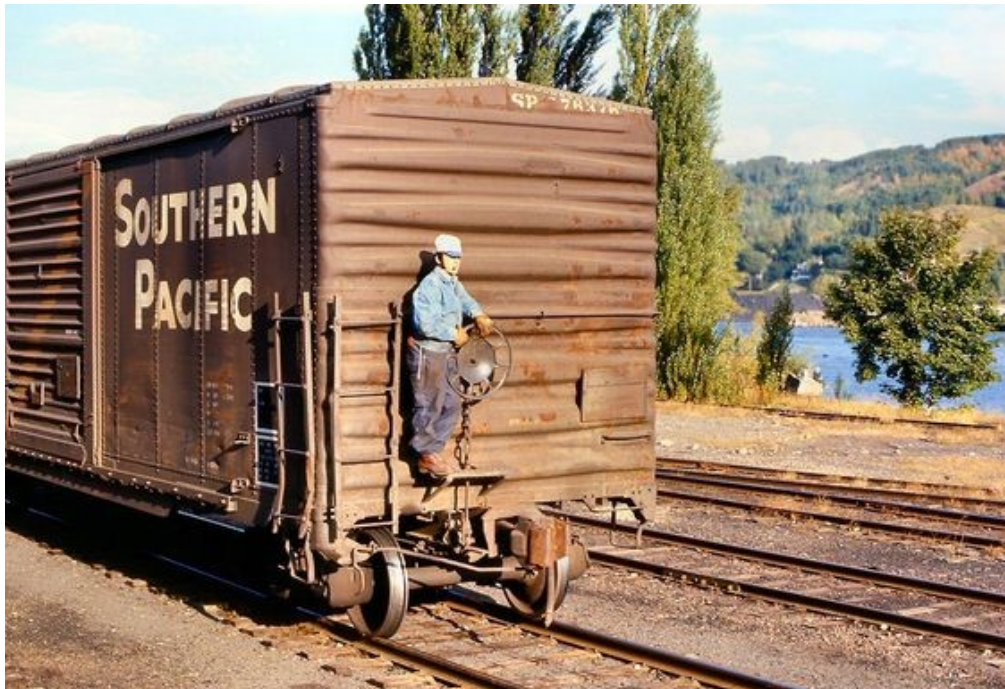
This silver passenger truck is now ready to be painted black.



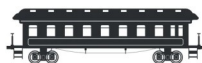
RAILROAD TRIVIA ANSWER

In the old days, the brakemen walked the top of the running train to apply brakes, as air brakes became better developed they used the roof walks to access retainers, set hand brakes, and to relay signals. The Federal Railroad Administration mandated that beginning in 1966, no new cars could be built with roof walks for safety reasons. The actual date set by the FRA for roof walk removal was 1974, and as far as the rule went the roof walk had to be taken off. However, a sizable number of cars made it into the 80's with roof walks, and I am sure a few made it to the 90's with them on. Also, to go along with the roof walk removal many roads also chopped the side and end ladders on their cars to 1/2 to 2/3 their original height.

1966 - Federal ban on roof walks for new cars ordered after April 1st.
10-1-1966 - Federal ban on roof walks for new cars delivered.
1-1-1967 - High mounted hand brakes prohibited on new cars.
1-1-1974 - Roof walks to be removed from all cars, but this was extended to:
12-31-1983 - Roof walks outlawed on all boxcars/reefers.



This looks a whole lot safer than standing on top!



BUSINESSES ASSOCIATED WITH OUR CLUB



Jim's Train Sales

O & G Gauge New & Used Trains

Jim Hendley

Etowah, North Carolina 28729

Lionel, MTH, USA Trains, PIKO, LGB
Bridgwerks Power Supplies, Bachmann
Split-Jaw Rail Clamps, O & G Gauge Track

Garden Railroad Design, New and Used Track
You can now reach Jim at: hendleyjim4@gmail.com
Or....(828) 333-2523

A reminder to all our members of the Train Lovers Luncheons:

The Asheville Train Lovers Luncheons are on every 2nd Thursday of the month at the Post 25 restaurant in Arden, NC at 11:30.

The Greater Greenville Train Lovers Luncheons. They are on the first Tuesday of every month at the A&P Restaurant in Greer starting at 11:30 AM.

The Columbus Luncheons at Rural Seed are held at 12:00 on the Third Thursday of each month.



WEB BITS

[Home | SAM Shortline](#)

[Craggy Mountain Line – Historic section of railroad located in Buncombe County, North Carolina](#)

[NC Transportation Museum | The museum that moves you!](#)

The April PGRS Newsletter will be here soon.

