

# PGRS TRACKIN'



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## The Newsletter of the Piedmont Garden Railway Society

**November 2022**

**Editor: Wayne Hamilton**

### **Greetings**

We're back in town from our southern excursion. As expected, my layout needs about two inches of leaves removed. Good luck to us all in chasing leaves for a while. We were lucky to see several historic depots, train layouts, and railroading sites during our trip, which I'll share in future newsletters. I am still trying to profile various members and share their garden railroading story about how they got into the hobby. Please also remember to share data about your railway. Please send any idea, project, photo, something you found surfing on the Internet, etc., no matter how great or small they may be, to your newsletter editor. Send your materials to: [railman1959@aol.com](mailto:railman1959@aol.com) Special thanks to this month's contributors.

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### **Club Messages**

As always, consider sharing this newsletter with friends who might be interested and if they wish to become members ask them to contact our PGRS Secretary/Treasurer for a membership form. Dues can be mailed to PGRS Secretary/Treasurer at:

Doc Watson  
125 Mistletoe Trail  
Hendersonville, NC 28791  
[docwatson@morrisbb.net](mailto:docwatson@morrisbb.net)

## A Rocky Cove Railroad Wedding By: Scott Williams

I recently was asked if I could run some trains during an evening wedding in the Arboretum Amphitheater on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. Of course, I said “Yes”!!



The Rocky Cove Railroad has members of the PGRS in 'its roots'. Club Members helped with the design and construction about 8 years ago. I remember one night during the first Winter Lights event; another young fellow approached me in a shy fashion and asked if he and his girlfriend could come 'behind the ropes' for a minute. I, of course, inquired why? He looked around nervously and he said: "I want to propose to my fiancé by the train trestle". I said: "Get yur' ass in here Boy!!"

The recent wedding was a lovely event with perfect fall weather, and I enjoyed standing on both train whistles when the officiant said that the Groom could kiss the Bride. Here's a photo from that event.



Also, recently the Arboretum and the Rocky Cove RR received a beautiful memorial. A brand new, marvelously constructed model of one of the homes in Biltmore Village, built by a grandfather in memorial of his granddaughter. The building is called "Abigail's Toy Store". The gentleman in question used Richard Sharp Smith's blueprints for the model and the Rocky Cove Railroad finally has an outstanding example of Biltmore Village Architecture.



The Rocky Cove goes to sleep during the weekends now until next April and will only be run at night during Winter Lights until the end of the year but come by next spring and see the beautiful landscaping and the new building as it has matured so nicely since it was planted, years ago.

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**Railfanning - Prototypes to inspire a garden railway layout.**

### **The Grand Canyon Railway**

**By: Wayne Hamilton**

In July of 2017, we rode the Grand Canyon Railway from Williams, AZ to the south rim of the Grand Canyon National Park. Here's a little history of the line. In 1897 the Santa Fe and Grand Canyon Railroad Company was incorporated. The railroad changed management and consolidated numerous times in the early year. The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway took over and completed the 65 miles of track to Grand Canyon in 1901. The Grand Canyon Railway made its first journey to the Grand Canyon on September 17, 1901.

Over the years, the Santa Fe also built many of the structures that now grace the South Rim. After all, if they were going to start bringing people in large numbers, they had to have a way to accommodate and feed them. When the train first arrived in 1901, tent camps were found along the rim. The Santa Fe approached the development with engineering skills and technology of the times that made a wonderful contribution still evident today. In 1904, the railroad hired the Fred Harvey Company to manage the hotels and restaurants at the Grand Canyon for the Santa Fe, and in 1905, Santa Fe built its flagship hotel, the El Tovar, which became the finest lodging at the rim and arguably in the Southwest at the time. The railroad, in a most progressive move for the times, hired Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, a woman, to design many of the buildings that have become part of the signature of Grand Canyon National Park. Her distinctive touch stamped an indelible imprint the building at the Grand Canyon with her version of a natural style of Pueblo Indian architecture. Colter is responsible for such landmarks as the Hopi House, Lookout Studio, Bright Angel Lodge, Desert View Watchtower, and Hermit's Rest.

The Grand Canyon Railway stopped service to Grand Canyon in 1968 after ridership declined due to the rise in popularity of automobile travel. In 1989, Grand Canyon Railway put a stop to the salvage work and began a detailed restoration process. The decaying tracks were rebuilt, the historic depots at both ends of the line were restored, and after 21 years, passenger service once again returned to Grand Canyon National Park. The Railway was reopened for passenger service on September 17, 1989, by entrepreneurs Max and Thelma Biegert—88 years to the day of the first passenger train to the Grand Canyon.

There are six classes of accommodations for your trip. We splurged on the best as this was a once in a lifetime trip for us, the Luxury Parlor Car is a grand tradition of elegance and extraordinary comforts. It has lounge-style comforts including a private bar, no children allowed under 15, and access to the open-air rear platform.



Departure from the Former Santa Fe Station in Williams, AZ

You will travel the same tracks that early adventurers to the Grand Canyon followed. The trains depart daily at 9:30 a.m. Arizona mountain standard time. The train arrives to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon at 11:45 a.m. at the Grand Canyon Depot, built in 1910. You'll have more than 3 hours to explore the canyon and its historic buildings and exhibits. The train departs the canyon at 3:30 p.m. and arrives back to Williams at 5:45 p.m. More info is available at [Grand Canyon Train](#)



Parlor Car interior looking toward the platform    Looking toward the bar & our return trip entertainment



FPA-4 on display near the Grand Canyon Depot



The Former Santa Fe Depot at the Grand Canyon



Our Parlor Car “ Max Biebert” named after the owners.

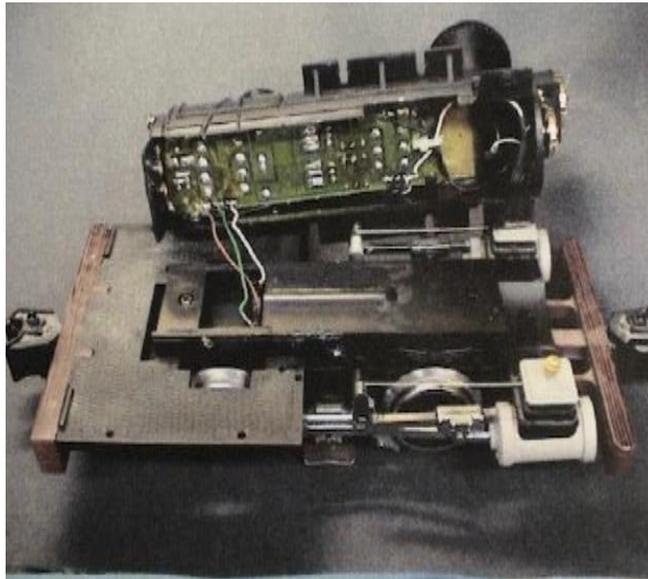
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## The Backshop – Modeling Tips and Projects

### SMALL, INEXPENSIVE BATTERY CONVERSION USING PIKO 35040 R/C SYSTEM

Part Two by: Doc Watson

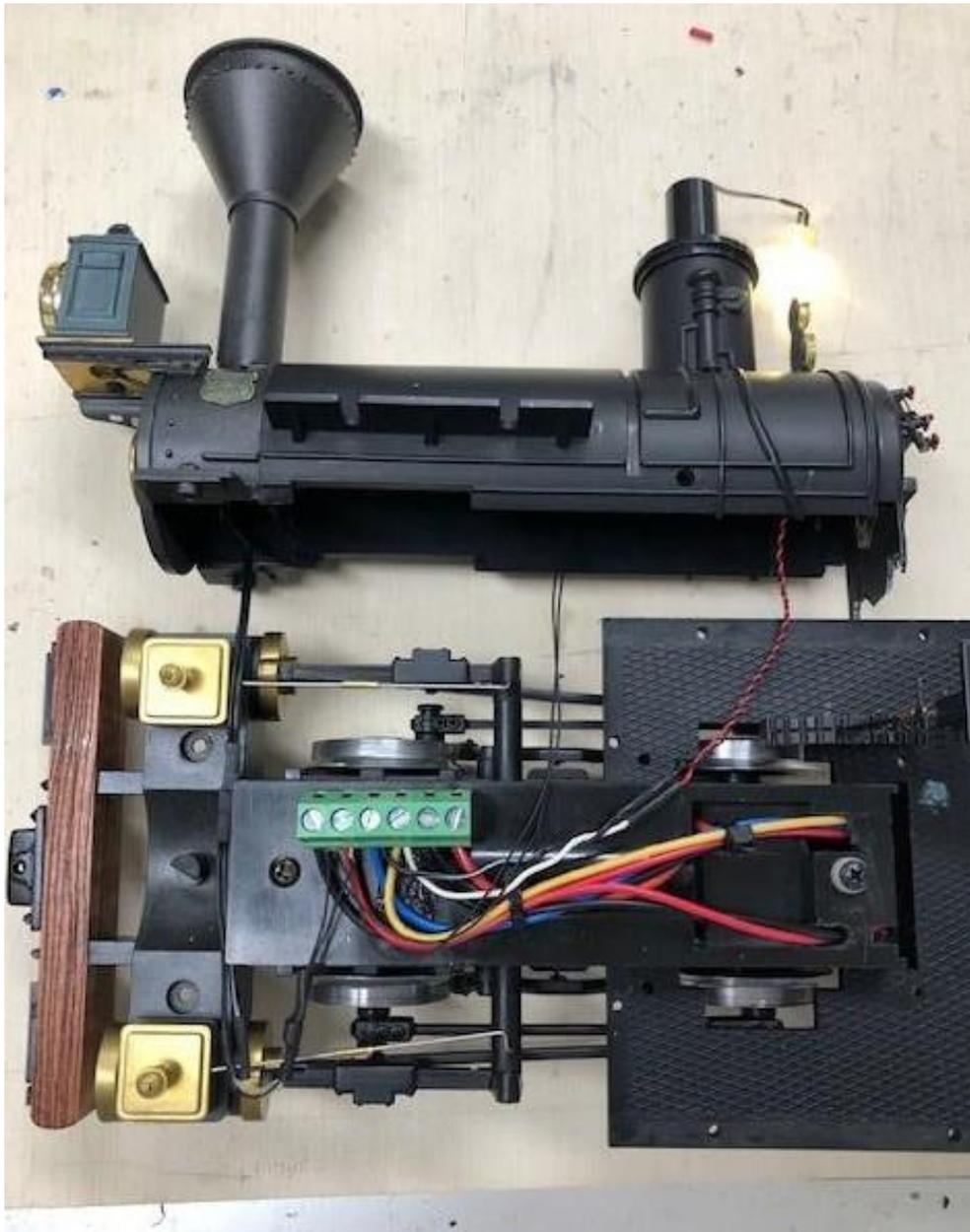
In the last Newsletter I described the addition of the R/C battery conversion components to my trailing tender. In this article I'll describe the changes I had to make to my LGB Porter engine. This is what the inside of the engine looks like with the boiler removed. The cab and tank have already been removed.



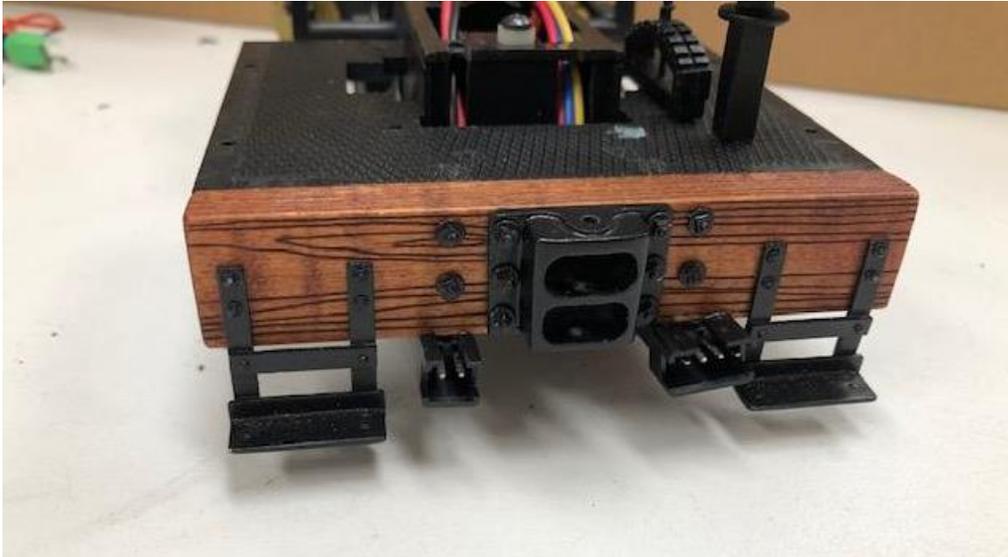
Next is a picture of the Porter disassembled. The main parts are the cab, the boiler, the tank which contains a weight, the LGB very old circuit card and the main chassis. The first thing I did was to strip all the wiring and remove the slider pickups, the circuit card and the filament headlamp and cab light.



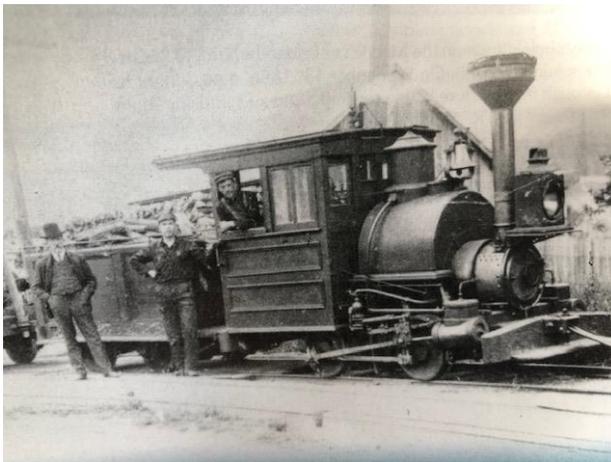
This is what the new wiring looks like. The green terminal strip is an attempt to organize the wiring. I installed LED's for the headlamp and cab light. There are only two wires to the motor now. The remaining wires are for the lights and the small, enclosed speaker which I mounted in the cab. There are six wires running back to the tender. Two are for the motor, two are for the speaker and two for the lighting.



I installed a 4 pin and a 2 pin connector. I decided to glue the two connectors to the bottom of the rear beam to make it easier to plug into and reduce the play in the connections.



That's it for the conversion. The new PIKO R/C unit made it possible to keep the size of the tender small enough to make the whole thing more prototypical as shown in my previous article.



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## Railroad Trivia

This railroad boasts it gave birth to one of the oldest railroads in America. It was also the first interstate railroad in America and the first standard gauge railroad. Anyone know the name and location of this railroad? Answers later in this newsletter.

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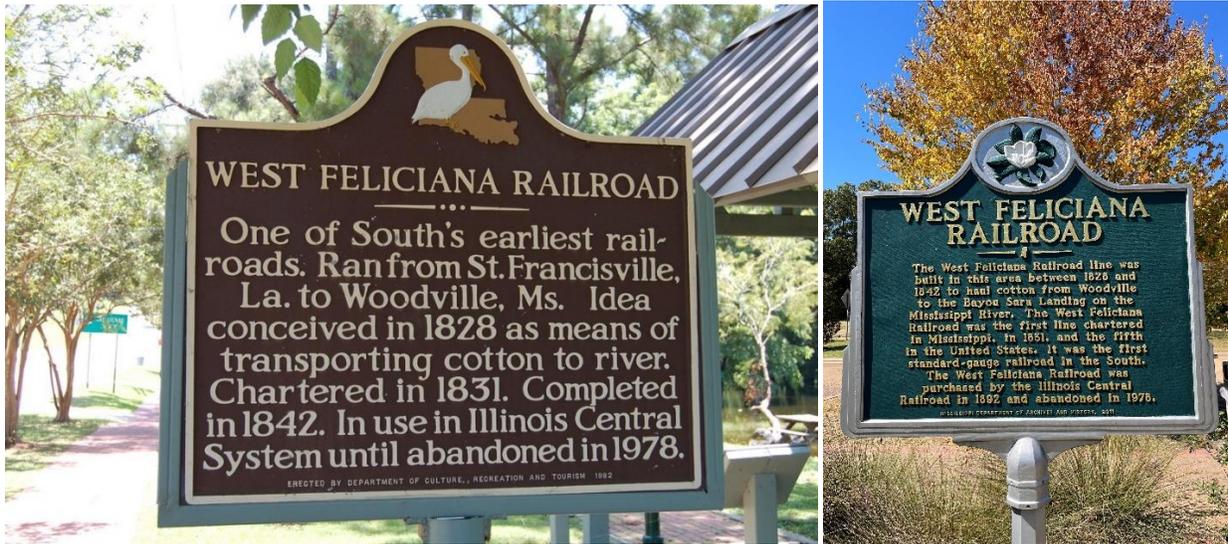
## A PGRS Member Photo for Fall

By: Randy Theis



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## Railroad Trivia Answers



The West Feliciana Railroad was chartered by the Louisiana legislature on March 25, 1831. It was the first interstate railroad in America and the first standard gauge railroad in America (4ft. 8½ in. was adopted by all major railroads in North America in June 1886.) The railroad would run some 26 miles from Bayou Sara in St. Francisville, Louisiana to Woodville, Mississippi. The Mississippi legislature authorized their part of the railroad in December 1833.

Formal construction began on December 22, 1834. There were many setbacks to the project including the Panic of 1837, more-difficult terrain than was expected, right-of-way conflicts with plantation owners, strikes by laborers, and failures by contractors. But the railroad finally made its first complete trip from Bayou Sara to Woodville on October 13, 1842. The West Feliciana Railroad was almost completely destroyed during the Civil War. All property, locomotives, and rolling stock were confiscated by the Union Army.

Not until 1875 was it rebuilt, once again replacing mules with steam. J. Burrus McGehee, a son of Judge Edward McGehee, kept the line operating until 1888. It was then sold to the Louisville, New Orleans and Texas line. The consolidation of this line with the Yazoo & Mississippi Valley Railroad in 1892 brought the West Feliciana Railroad into the Illinois Central System, where it remained until operations ceased in 1978.

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## 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](mailto:hendleyjim4@gmail.com)  
Or...(828) 333-2523



**Peggy Keyes**  
Owner / Chief Conductor  
RightTrackTrainMuseum@gmail.com  
828/625-5551

**The Right Track Toy Train Museum**  
A non-profit museum to benefit Pancreatic Cancer  
research  
2414 Memorial Hwy (Rte 64/74)  
Lake Lure, NC 28746  
Find us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Right-Track-Toy-Train-Museum-141291999274246/>

I am planning to close the Right Track Toy Train Museum at the end of 2023. Hours for both years are Fri., Sat., Sun 1- 5 PM.

**2022** - everything that is for sale in the museum - 20% off.

**2023** - everything that is for sale in the - 50% off.

### **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.

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## Web Bits

The September/October Edition of the Garden railway News is available at this link:

[GRNews SeptOct2022](#)

G Scale Graphics has an extensive list of PDF articles available at this link:

[Technical Support \(gscalegraphics.net\)](http://gscalegraphics.net)

Scott Williams submitted these pictures of the modular layout of the Tulsa Garden Railroad club he saw on the Reindeer Pass website.

What a great little layout using 4'x4' modules. Might be an idea for folks who are downsizing their Garden Train operations and want something that can store, or move inside, during the indoor months.



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