

The Semaphore

June 2019

A publication of the 2nd Division of the Pacific Northwest Region of the NMRA

Better Late Than Never!

It has been a while. And as reason (but not excuse), its been a busy month in the Kurschner household: two graduations, three birthdays with multiple celebrations, a regional convention, and a Canadian road trip. Throw in a busy work schedule and an extended 3D modeling binge, so one, I hope you will forgive ye old editor, and two, I hope one of you might see this as a reason to take pity on me and volunteer! Finally, with this edition hitting your email box ut less than a week before our next meeting, I hope it will remind and encourage you to come and join us in Marquam. (Details in the Notes from the Caboose below).

- *Richard Kurschner, editor pro-tem*

May Event Report

Report and photos by Richard Kurschner

Our May event was held at the Clark County PUD center on May 18th and was attended by 16 members. As it was considered our Annual Meeting, **Jeff Shultz** gave an overview of the Division's year, and **Dave Holden** presented a summary of the Division's finances. In summary, we are in good shape except for the low turnout at our monthly events. The other order of business was the announcement of the election results. As previously mentioned **Stu Cato** ran unopposed and thus was elected by acclamation to continue as our Vice Superintendent. Five people ran for Director. Incumbent Dave Holden was reelected and will continue as Treasurer. New to the board, **Bob Letha** was also elected. Congratulations to both! The board would like to thank **Larry Nunn** and **John Sparrows** for offering their services. Finally, the board wished to extend a special thank you to outgoing member **Fred Kaser** for all the services he has provided to the Division during his years of service.



Jon Harrison Presenting his Cajon Pass Layout

With the required annual activities out of the way, **Jon Harrison** gave an overview of his layout with special attention to how he detailed Central Valley Turnouts. Jon models the summit area of Cajon Pass as it was in 1950. In his 2800 square foot basement he can model the trackage at Summit at 75% of scale size. The rest of the approaches are compressed only a little more at 60% of scale size. All of Jon's turnouts are hand laid on Central Valley tie strips. Once done, he adds considerably more detail: tie plates, rail bars, and stock rail braces. He also makes sure that there is ballast under the points, dramatically improving the realistic look of the turnout. Another key feature of Jon's turnouts is operating switch stands. No, they don't move the points, but they do move with the points. His operators have found this to be a major help during sessions as they can just look at the targets down the line to ensure they are properly lined, just like the prototype railroaders do with real switch stands. Finally, the operating procedures at Summit required the use of several spring switches to make turning of helper locomotives more efficient. So of course, Jon added this to his Summit as well. He provided a fascinating overview of how real spring switches are made and how he replicated them in HO scale. In all Jon provided us with an insightful presentation, and I hope I can see his Cajon Pass someday soon!



Joe Fugate presenting "Make it Run Like a Dream"

Our second presentation was from **Joe Fugate** who was practicing his clinic on "Make it Run Like a Dream" for the National convention in July. Building his Siskiyou Pass layout, Joe has developed several techniques and guidelines to make his railroad run predictably well. For trackwork he has some reasonably well-known guidelines such as minimum curve radii and controlled vertical curves. I found his vertical curve conformance jig especially ingenious. Of course, Joe says to test and gauge your turnouts before using them, but if they start having problems afterwards, replace 'em, don't waste time trying to fix 'em. He also discussed his recent editorial on non-polar track cleaning fluids that had blown up on social media. Joe went on to talk about wheel & truck standards, coupler testing, car weight, car tilt/warp, and locomotive break in techniques. If Joe's concept of quality of run over quantity of run interests you, check him out at the National convention next month, or get a copy of his books.



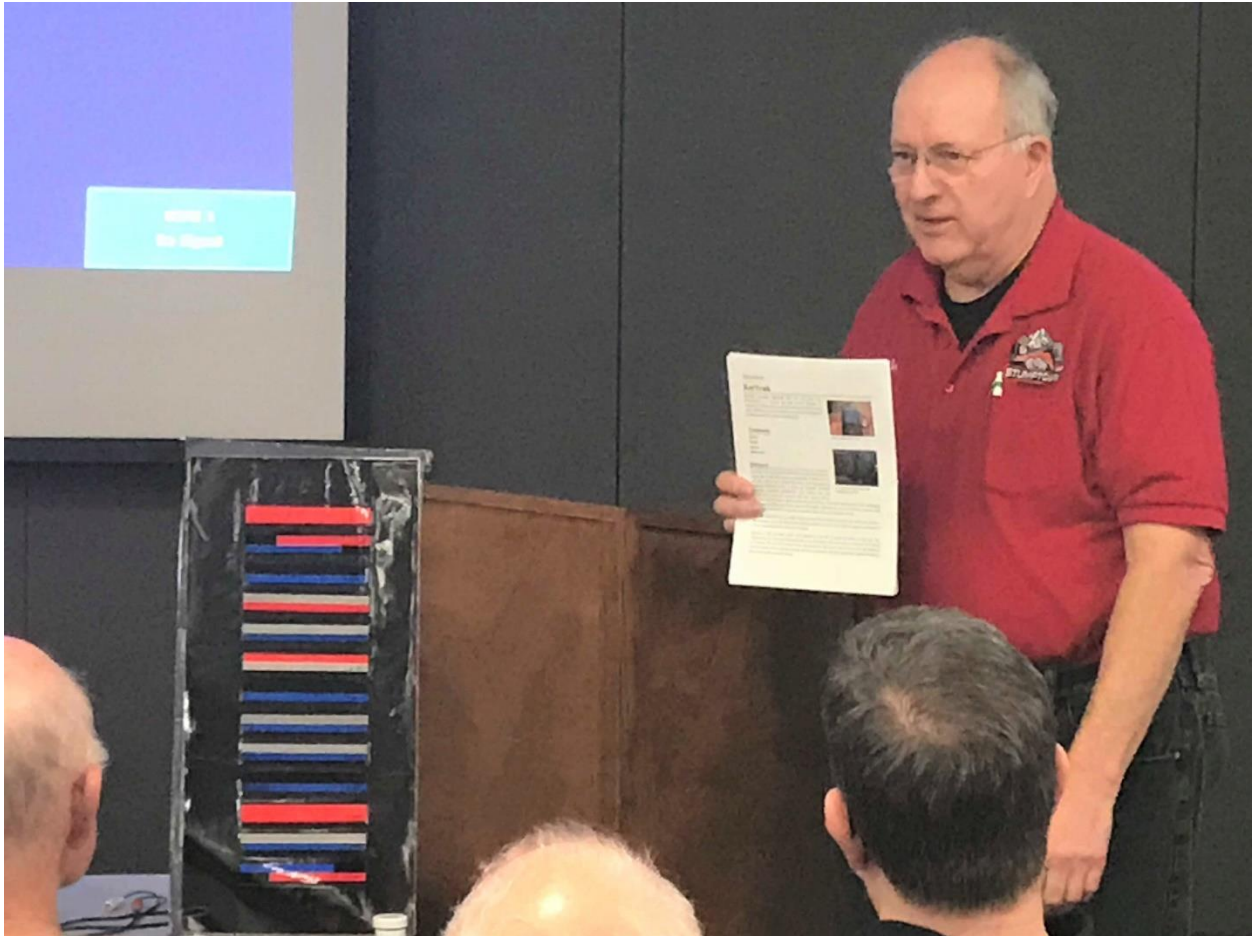
Larry Nunn showing Mt. St. Helens the day before it erupted

The date of our meeting was also the 39th anniversary of the first major eruption of Mt. St. Helens. Larry Nunn was in the Army National Guard at the time, and as a part of his duties, he was in the air the day before and the day of the eruption. Although completely non-railroad related, we all enjoyed seeing the pictures he took. Many were much closer than the one below.



Mt. St. Helens, May 18, 1980.

Finally, John Sparrows displayed a ACI KarTrak label that he had sitting in his garage (along with 50+ more) from an order to FMV that apparently was canceled. If you want one, give him a call.



John Sparrows with an ACI

Notes from the Caboose

The next scheduled event for the 2nd Division will be on June 29th at 10:00 at the Marquam United Methodist Church, 36971 OR-213, Mt Angel, OR 97362. Fred Kaser will be presenting and will have his largely scratchbuilt On2 layout available for visiting after the meet. Plus, **Charlie Comstock** will be back to talk about modeling his BC&SJ in Trainz. And **Bill Decker** will be reporting out on the WOOPS event from last weekend. In all it should be a good last event for the 2nd Division!

Why did I say, "Last Event"? Well, we've decided there will be no event in July, so go ahead and head for the National convention in Salt Lake City (July 7 to July 13, more information at <http://www.nmra2019slc.org/>). It is nice to have a National close by, but not so close that we must run it! And we will not be having an event in August. Or, more correctly, we will be having a joint event with the 1st Division down in Eugene on August 10th. Located at the Gainsborough Community Clubhouse, 2555 Lansdown Rd., the doors will open at 9am with coffee and donuts, with the program beginning at 10am. Several clinics and a Make & Take workshop are planned, and if you want to bring model railroad items to sell, bring a table to put them on too. If you have models that you would like to have evaluated for AP Credit, this will be available. This is an all-day event, extending into the afternoon, with lunch items available for purchase (or you can bring your own). The Make and Take will be on making polyurethane or hydrocal castings. If you have your own molds, you are welcome to bring them. Note: this is messy: gloves will be provided, and don't wear your best shirts! I've also heard a rumor

that your Secretary will be one of the clinic presenters, something about “Thoughts on Traffic Generation”. I have been to their Mini-Meets before and I can assure you they are well done, and you won’t be disappointed. For more information see <http://pnr.nmra.org/1div/>.

Superintendent Note: We’ll be back to our normal meet schedule of the 3rd Saturday in September, save the 21st on your calendars for it!

Did you go to the convention in Cranbrook? I did, and I had a great time. The people were great, and the clinics were great. I even went on one of the prototype tours to the Kimberly Mine. I found this quite interesting as they actually ran some of the mining equipment for us: I cannot imagine working in such a close and noisy environment! And what about this little Ambulance car (photo at bottom)? For obvious reasons, I’d hate to have to ride in it, but this might be a real easy car to model (and start you on the way to your Car Builder AP certificate?) Jeff Shultz has promised me a write up with all the photos he took. How about next month’s issue, Jeff?

Don’t forget we are still looking for someone to be the editor of the Semaphore. If you’d like to make a little progress towards your author and volunteer AP certificates, this is a great way to do it! Contact the board (board@2dpnr.org) if you are interested.

Finally, we really want to find ways to get our meeting attendance up. What would it take to get YOU to show up? Either drop us a line at board@2dpnr.org, or if you’d like to talk with a real human, call me at 503-901-3464. We know some folks can’t come, but most of you could at least occasionally, so what is it that keeps you away?

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of the Semaphore. Talk with you on the next run!

- *Richard Kurschner, editor pro-tem*



Kimberly Mine Ambulance Car