

Calendar

Dec 17, 11:00 – 3:00
Christmas Party
Georges & Marie Arsenault



December 2022
Special Christmas Issue

This is why our “club” is called the *Gold Coast Garden Railway Society*. I am grateful for good friends in the GCGRS and that we live in such a beautiful area. *Ventura river mouth, Friday, November 18 at 4:47pm*



Newsletter: John Lyans
lyans@pacbell.net

Accounts/Badges:
Bruce Kuebler
pbkuebler@sbcglobal.net

Web Page: Gary Olmstead
<https://www.gcgrs.com/>

Meet Scheduling/Facebook: John & Kim Whitaker
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/145996342219253/>



**GCGRS Annual Christmas Party set for Saturday, December 17 at 11:00 am.
20361 Valerio Street, Winnetka, California**

Georges and Marie will be cooking turkey and ham. Please bring a side dish such as potatoes, vegetables or a desert.

Bring your own trains to run on Georges' huge railroad, ride the Santa Fe train.

This year we will reprise the infamous "White Elephant/Gift Exchange." If you want to participate bring a wrapped gift.

The December meet is often the highlight of the year. See you on Saturday, 12/17!



November - Siegel Meet

We, Nick and John Ryan, worked to get the railroad ready for the November 19 meet. We covered a water leak hole at Rincon and were able to realign the passing track and make it possible to have a meet. We also bolstered the wooden bridge out of Felton. The wooden supports had rotted to the point that there was nothing supporting the support. We ran a train on Marilyn's railroad most of the day and it seems to be in good working order.

Now for the interesting news. Nick discovered a mound of mud covering the bridge coming out of the tunnel on the upper line. It was pretty obvious that it wasn't from the recent rains. Further inspection located the source of the mud flow. The hose spigot near the fire pit had been cut and capped and there is still an open hole that cuts across the walking path. Also, there's a string line running west to east that cuts through the walking path. This is a property line marker set up by his neighbor behind him. It seems Gary has another property dispute on his hands. The railroad itself isn't affected but the path is. It could be interesting Saturday. So, Nick is going to make a couple inspection visits during the week just to see if these clowns do anymore damage. This will give us a chance to be prepared for any issues Saturday morning. Also, if need be, to give advance warning to club members if necessary.

It's always something! *John Ryan*

Well, Nick and John pulled trough again. By Saturday the 19th, the railroad was once again operational. We will see what the future holds, especially for the back section. Apparently there is to be a large wall built along the back of the property that will eliminate the old logging branch. The wall will also mess up with the aesthetics of the trees along the back.

But in the meantime we enjoyed a beautiful day running trains and celebrating Gary's 85th birthday. Happy birthday Gary!





Happy Birthday Gary! Bruce with cake brought by Kim Whitaker



Gary Raymond is pictured delivering a solo, heartfelt rendition of Sheriff John's birthday song. (You're another year old today).



Everything behind the
red string may be
hidden behind a block
wall.

Bill Fincher and his
Shay pull a train







Sobering news from Don Morgan

As most of you know, Linda Morgan has had leukemia for 21 years. It has been in remission since about 2002. Don has reported that the leukemia has recently come “roaring back” and she is now in hospice care at her home in Santa Ynez.

We wish comfort and prayers to Don and Linda during this sobering time

2023 Ventura County Fair

There has recently been a slew of emails being exchanged among 2022’s build crew about the 2023 fair. Despite some calls for restraint until the final track plan is decided on, several are already getting ready to start building some of the layout features. What an enthusiastic bunch! The fair layout for 2023 is going to be much bigger and maybe better? We will see. If you want to get involved contact Gary Olmstead.

Exciting New Series

Talented model builder John Ryan has started a very cool, ambitious project building a 7 ½” gauge Locomotive. Here is part one. John promises a new chapter each month.

Building a 7 ½ inch Gauge Locomotive

By John Ryan

Part 1

A few of you may have heard me mention my desire to acquire a 7½ in gauge locomotive. Well, I took the plunge and bought the makings of a locomotive, a locomotive that I intend to build myself. I also thought that maybe some of you would be interested in the build process. So, I decided to take you through the build in a series of articles for our newsletter.

For those that may not know, 7½ gauge is the size of the ride on trains at various parks such as LA Live Steamers and a few private residences. There are other gauges but my focus is on 7 ½. Some of you may have taken a ride on Mike Newlon's train or ridden Georges Arseneault's railroad. Those are examples of 7½ inch gauge. I believe Mike's trains are 3¾ inch scale where Georges's is 1.5 in scale. What's the difference? Georges's trains are built to a scale that represents standard gauge trains where Mike's are built to a scale that represents narrow gauge trains. Both operate on the same gauge track. Two other Gold Coast members, Gary Raymond and Bob Uniack are 7 ½ gaugers and, along with Georges are members of LA Live Steamers.

One last note: Many people tend to use gauge and scale interchangeably. I myself have been known to make that mistake and I know better. There is however, a difference. Scale is the scaled down size of a prototype such as a locomotive. 1.5 scale is 1½ inches = 1 foot. Gauge is the distance between the inner surfaces of the rails. Standard gauge is 4 ft 8½ inches. Narrow gauge is typically 3ft though some railroads are even smaller.

Let's start from the beginning.

My real desire would have been a much larger locomotive. An SW1500 would've been to my liking or even larger locomotive such as a GP or SD. Those types of locomotives are anywhere from 400 to 1000 lbs and 6 to 9 ft long. Not an easy handle. Also, they don't quite fit the 6 ft. bed of my truck.

I started thinking smaller. A locomotive that I, or with the help of a second person, could easily move without the need of lifts or ramps. Something I could place directly on the tracks. A loco, that would easily fit in my truck bed or even the trunk of a car.

I decided on a company called Plum Cove Studios. They make a little box cab locomotive in kit form.



Plum Cove Studios boxcab

They also sell what they call the Generic Frame kit.

With the frame kit, you get the frame, motor trucks, couplers and the electronics. You decide what you want your loco to be.

Sometime during September of 2021, I ordered the frame kit. It took 9 months but it finally arrived. I was just about to contact them to see if they had forgotten me. Then one day I got a big surprise.

The box was a bit beat up and to my dismay, there were some missing parts. I immediately sent an email to inform them of the missing pieces. The next day I did get a phone call from the owner. He promised that he would replace the items but that it might take some time. In the meantime, I decided to start work on the frame. I did some grinding on a few rough spots, made sure everything was reasonably straight and finally gave her some paint. Being an SP guy, it had to be a gray! Probably should've found a darker shade of gray but it works.

Well, after waiting for a couple weeks, I realized that I could come up with suitable replacements of my own. And so, the build begins.

This is the Generic Frame Kit. As you can see, both axles are powered with dual 24v motors.



The 2-1x2's are the replacements that I came up with for one of the missing items. The missing items are called standoffs. The standoffs raise the floor above the drive wheels and coupler pockets.



Also missing were the 2 torque rods. They suspend and hold in place the motor mounts. I used threaded rod as replacements. If I ever receive the torque rods, I'll probably replace the threaded rod with the torque rods.

My initial idea was to create some kind of a speeder or ride-able locomotive



I even thought about something like this. Wouldn't that be a sight, speeding down the tracks on a plastic chair. The wheelbase however, is kind of close. I don't think it would take much to tip it backwards.



I found a company called Mike's Railcars. They make a direct replacement body for the Plum Cove frame. They call it the Switcheroo. I was

leaning heavily towards their industrial switcher body.



Mike's Railcars - Switcheroo

I was real close to ordering the Switcheroo body but then, I started thinking (a dangerous thing for me). I could build the body myself out of wood.

The frame is 1ftx2ft. If built to 1.5 scale, that's 8ftx16ft. That got me thinking a bit more. I could build a locomotive in sections. Just add 2 more frame kis, couple them with drawbars and MU them. Three separate sets of running gear, each representing a section of a locomotive. That is 6 driving axles! MO POWER!!!!

With the fuel tanks hanging down around the bottom of the frame of the middle section, the drive wheels would be partially hidden.

I started looking at the dimensions of various locomotives.

EMD's are my loco of choice. EMD locomotive heights are pretty standard, typically 15ft. Accessories such as air conditioners can add a little to the height. Widths are 10ft. Lengths of course can vary.

So which locomotive will I choose?

I thought about an F unit. F's were 50 ft and change in length. Just about perfect for the 3 powered chassis, which would be 48 scale ft., not including the extra distance between couplers. With the entire car body being the full width, battery placement would be easy and there'd be ample room for interior accessories.



However, the rounded nose I felt, was a bit too challenging for my wood working skills.

Part 2 next issue

I also thought about an Amtrak P42. The P42 might possibly have been the easiest option but not quite in line with my desire.



When it came down to it, I really wanted a GP unit. I grew up with 2nd generation Geeps and SD's.

Geeps tend to vary in length depending on which GP it is and whether it's the original or a dash 2 version. Most, starting with the GP40, are about 60 ft or more. A 4th chassis could fill the extra length. But, do I split the dynamic brake blister? I think I could pull it off, however, maybe I should do a bit more looking!?

I landed on the GP35. It's a little long but close enough. Add in the distance between the couplers, put in the front and rear porches, that's just about right for the 56ft length of the GP35. Probably the biggest selling point for me was the fact that the 35's were turbo charged. A turbo charged EMD is like music to me. By the way, did I mention that Joe Heumphreus sold me my first locomotive way back in 1972 and it just so happened to be an HO scale SP GP35?

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For the rivet counters, don't bother. First of all, I'm making it out of wood. You've heard of the Spruce Goose, well, maybe we should call my loco the Spruce Appaloosa. I'm not looking to replicate the GP35, it's just my pattern for the GEEP look. There may be elements of other GP's that weren't on the 35. I may even add in an element from an SD. So don't bother nit picking it.

The Casa Munoz Restaurant Railroad

by John Whitaker



My wife Kim and I were having lunch at Casa Munoz back in September, when the owner Pep Munoz, who I've known for many years on a personal level wanted to know if it was possible to build a railroad on the inside of the west atrium. I looked at the area he had in mind and said yes. I came back with my measuring tape and got measurements for a long oval about 32 feet long and 6.5 feet wide. I came home and had some extra LGB Code .332 track and fitted it together. I determined that I could build the curves with 2' radius, 4' diameter curved track with a 2' piece of straight track in the middle. With the curved track plus the 2' piece of straight track,

the diameter was 6'. The atrium has some small walls on both sides of it and I suggested to Pep that it would look great to have the track raised up at eye level so his customers could see the train. He agreed to that and so I drew up a track plan for him. We also agreed that the goal would be to have the railroad operational after Thanksgiving, ready for Christmas. Pep wanted to have a Christmas train running for his customers to celebrate Christmas. The pressure was on!

I determined that it was going to take at least 48 trestles at 16" high to have the track at eye level. I also determined that the track that was going to be on the east side of the atrium next to four booths didn't need to have trestles because you wouldn't really be able to see them anyway. I decided to use 8 foot long 2x4's with a support every 4 feet. I wanted to use good quality lumber so it wouldn't twist on me, so I called Gold Coast member Dale Jaedtke, a general contractor in Ventura for some advise. Dale said to use the kiln dried 2x4's. I took his advise and went to Lowe's and purchased enough

lumber for 20' of track and supports. Thanks to Dale, these boards are straight and level. As you'll see in the pictures, I started making trestles with a homemade template that I designed for my own railroad. Kim & I hand picked and purchased cedar fence boards without a lot of knots in the wood. I cut the wood 5/8" square, 6' long for the trestle stringers on my table saw. Kim painted the wood with good Sherwin-Williams paint. I measured and cut the wood, glued and used my little air compressor to shoot the nails in to build the trestles. Kim would then do the touch up painting on the trestles wherever I had made a cut. We also painted the kiln dried 2x4's the same dark brown color that I have on my trestles at my house.



Once I had around 25 trestles made, it was time to start construction. On October 17th, I started at the south end of the atrium making the 6' diameter curve. I had to make sure the first trestle was at the right height so that the track would be at eye level. With some small pieces of 5/8" top stringers and a small piece of Code .332 track, I found the right height. With my 4' level and small torpedo level, I started making the 6' diameter curve. Pep and I decided it would be best to build the 30' of straight track on the west side of the atrium first. This is because of the waiting bench near the front door of the restaurant on the east side of the atrium. Pep didn't want kids trying to grab the track and trestles before he had 3' of glass installed to protect the railroad. I started working northbound, installing a trestle every fourteen inches. As you'll see in the pictures, it started coming together.

Bakersfield Glass Company came by a few days after I started work and took measurements to install the glass. Within a week, all but one section of glass had been installed. The last section will be a sliding section, so Pep can have access inside the layout and the transformer, since the layout is track powered for continuous problem free operation.

Every day I worked from 7:30 AM to 11:00AM building the railroad. The restaurant opens for lunch at 11:00AM, so I had to have everything picked up by 11:00. Pep always fed me lunch everyday, so that was a treat also! The food at Casa Munoz is great! In the afternoon, I went home and made 2 or 3 new trestles to stay ahead of construction.

On the east side, I installed the trestles working north, then transitioned to the 2x4's next to the booths. Within a short period of time, I was already at the north end of the layout installing the 6' diameter curve on trestles again.

Within this time period, I took Pep up to see Hans & Rachel at Gold Coast

Station in Tehachapi to look for a train to run on his layout. Hans showed him a beautiful Piko steam engine with a matching caboose that you'll see in the pictures. A few days later, Pep and his wife Shalise went back up to Tehachapi and purchased the Piko engine with some Christmas cars and other rolling stock. He also purchased a 10 amp USA transformer. Many of you had the opportunity to meet Pep & Shalise at the Siegel's a few weeks ago. They had such a great time that they joined Gold Coast! On November 16th, I installed the 50th trestle and connected the track together. Pep put his Piko engine on the track and we did our first test run! Everyone was so excited to see the train running and



hear the chuffing sound! Pep had a smile on his face from ear to ear!

After the excitement of the test run, I reminded Pep that my work wasn't done yet. I learned from Crazy Charlie Richard and Bobby Hahn with my layout

that with a track powered layout, it's always good to solder jumper wires on each track connection for good electrical flow. For the next two weeks I drilled and soldered every track connection on the 76' of track on the layout. In the meantime, Pep would run the train for his customers during lunch and dinner. His customers love the train and can't wait to bring other friends and family members in to see the train. Just a few days ago, I finished the

soldering of the track and wiring the track in two different spots for good electrical flow. I was doing some "fine tuning" of the layout this morning when Hans & Rachel stopped by the restaurant around 10:30AM before the restaurant opened. Hans & Rachel wanted to see the layout and Pep ran the train for them to see. Hans told me "good job", so coming from Hans, that made me feel good. Hans & Rachel can now promote the Casa Munoz Restaurant Railroad with everyone in the Bakersfield/Tehachapi area so people can see a G gauge railroad in operation. If you're ever in the Bakersfield area, Casa Munoz Restaurant is



located on the corner of Union Ave. and E. 18th Street. Pep would love to show you the layout and run his trains for you. Pep & Shalise are planning on building another layout inside the restaurant in the south atrium area. They also would like to build a layout in their backyard. We might have to have a double meet day here in Bakersfield! One at my house for a few hours and one at the Munoz house! Then for dinner we can go down to the restaurant, have some great Mexican food and see the layout(s)!

Come visit the Casa Munoz Restaurant Railroad!



FROM THE
SHOP OF
WALT
THOMPSON

ANAKA, The Sugar Cane Train

The LAHAINA KA'ANAPALI & PACIFIC RAILROAD



When visiting with friends on the island of Maui, Hawaii, we always seem to find time to ride that cute little steam train that departs out of Lahaina taking you through the sugar cane fields, the nearby towns and continuing over to Ka'anapali and back. Needless to say, i just had to have a model of it. Come to find out there was nothing available anywhere, in any scale, even in the little gift store there, so I settled for a few more pictures. After returning home, I looked around to see what was available and couldn't find anything so I decided if I wanted something, i was going to have to make it myself.

At the time, for my locomotive the only one that came close in 'G' scale was the early Bachmann 2-4-2 Porter. Numerous alterations had to be made to simulate the special boiler trimmings and distinctive features like the window awnings and Hawaii' state flags. Additional alterations required was completely removing the rear truck, a new whistle from Trackside Details and creating the special prototype looking smoke stack that I turned on my lathe from a bar of Delrin. To match the pictures I had taken i exchanged the cow guard for one with tow bar and added a tool box under the cab. These items were found in the GRITFY's miscellaneous parts drawers.



For the tender, I started with a 'who-knows-what' that went through quite a bit of modification and numerous add-ons. Things like Gary Raymond's metal wheels, some items from Trackside Details, plus supplementary bits and pieces from the shop. It also houses a speaker and digital sound board for the sound of steam. All this was done of course to achieve the look to best correspond with the pictures I had taken while there.

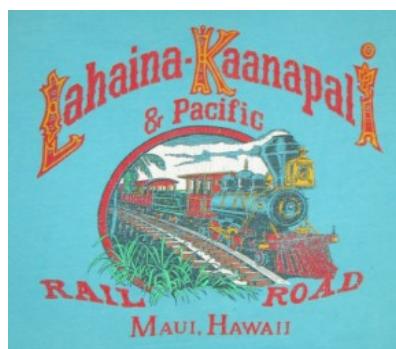
The excursion cars that were in service at that time we were there was KALAKAUA and DUKE KAHAANAMOKU. Named after two very prominent Hawaiian's.



To fabricate these cars I started with Bachmann Big Hauler passenger car kits. The window areas were cut and filed to open them up along with the cars ends that were modified to simulate the prototype. These cars roll on metal wheels and trucks from SHORTLINE Car & Foundry. The contoured roof assemblies were formed using .060 thick styrene sheets. Our conductor today appears to be Isao Watanabe, a longtime friend who came over from the Kalepolepo Beach area.



All of the special graphics for this train were created by Larry Larsen Graphics.
Aloha for looking and here's hoping you have a very **MELE KALIKIMAKA!**



Lamont Stolley Project

Lamont says that it's time for some serious re-building of the somewhat dilapidated trestle in his front yard.



Whats left of the old trestle

Bending the 10 ft. diameter stringers





Widened for roadbed and bent track to fit



Cut away bank and stack rock for new right away

