

Calendar

- Oct 29 Georges & Marie Arseneault
- Nov 5 Gary & Jane Olmstead
Canceled
- Nov 19 Gary & Marilyn Siegel
- Dec Christmas Party
Georges & Marie Arseneault



October 2022



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/>

On Saturday, September 10, the GCGRS met for a running session and a business meeting at Sal and Deborah Mele's home in Santa Barbara. The Mele's provided hot dogs and drinks and we got to experience Sal's mechanical masterpiece.

At about 1:30 we convened our second business meeting in 40 years. This meeting went a lot better than the last one and I am happy to report that there was no succession from the Society. We covered several topics and everyone seemed to be agreeable and of one mind.

First of all, there was universal enthusiasm to build a bigger and better fair exhibit in 2023. Gary Olmstead will by default be the chairman since he was the one that revived the idea of building a fair layout. He will recruit others to act as assistants to be in charge of sub tasks. (Plants, construction, track laying, etc). This should result in a more organized approach and less uncertainty about who should be doing what tasks and in what order they should occur. Randy Bryie was on top of this and he brought a set of drawings that provoked a lot of discussion. Thanks Randy.

Second, we voted to keep the dues at \$10 a year. In the past, dues money was used for printing and mailing the newsletter but the use of email has eliminated that expense. If you elect to not pay dues you could do something else like hosting a meet or party, be a webmaster, write the newsletter, (hint), etc. If you continue to receive the newsletter, even if you no longer want to be in the society, that is just because of sloppy record keeping. Consider it spam or email me to remove your name from the list if you want out. There was some discussion about eliminating the dues but everyone felt like we could use the money to build a great layout and and or use the money for some other project that might come to mind.

Third, after there was clarification about what we would spend the dues money on, Bruce Kuebler agreed to continue as a keeper of the account. Thanks Bruce.

This seemed like a good way to conduct a business meeting. We had a small group so it was easy to get a consensus. Everybody contributed comments and we covered everything fairly quickly. If we have another meeting and you would like a voice in some future issue, make sure to come to the meet. I'll try to notify everyone ahead of time that there will be a business meeting.

Happy Halloween
John Lyans









Ventura County Fair – After Action Report

Gary Olmstead

We were finally able to wrap up the 2022 Ventura County Fair with a meeting to discuss what went right (lots of things, including all the important stuff), where we need to improve, and get started on 2023. Everyone in attendance was in favor of doing another layout next year.

Present were Randy Bryie, Nick Conti, Jim and Sylvia Eldridge, Bill Fincher, Sonia Kroth and Mateo Mijangos, John and Amie Lyans, Byron McCracken, Sal and Deborah Mele, myself, Lamont Stolley, Art Sylvester and our newest member, Scott Flournoy.

As you may recall, we were right next to a beer garden. A lot of their customers came over to see us afterwards. There was some concern about their behavior, but apparently paying \$11 for a beer keeps out the riff-raff, as we had zero issues with them.

We gave away more than 300 business cards with our contact information. That would suggest that we were not invisible, but there were a number of anecdotal reports from several sources that people couldn't find us. John Lyans (*ed note: Kim Whitaker*), reported that the new head of the Fair, Stacy Rianda, stopped by and said she would like to see us in a more visible location next year. Barbara Schneider, the head of Floriculture, agrees and suggested a particular spot on the opposite side from where we were this year. A lot more on that below.

We did a lot of new things this year, and most of it worked out well. In 2019, we learned that the average viewer spends less than five minutes looking at the layout, and this year we designed with that in mind. For that visitor, more action is better.

The Good Things

Two tracks with wide curves and trains running in opposite directions made for nearly continuous action. That doesn't make a good layout, and if you are planning your first layout, don't do this. But remember the target audience.

The point to point track extended the action into the rather large area in the center.

The waterfall and river with its rapids looked and sounded great.

Trains that made noise attracted a lot of attention, especially from kids.

We can't be positive, but we suspect that having a circus train was the deciding factor in getting the Fair Theme Award.

Randy let kids press the buttons that blew the horn and rang the bell. That was popular.

The animals attracted attention, especially from younger kids.

The Not Good Things

We didn't know for sure that there was going to be a Fair until mid-April, and we couldn't meet with Barbara to settle on a location until April 25. So this was a really rush job.

I sketched out a plan for the track and water features, literally in pencil on graph paper. We estimated how much track we needed, and got enough people to loan track to cover our needs. That was about all the planning we did, which is OK for the track. I wanted to have more variation in elevations, but that didn't make it onto the diagram, and didn't happen on the layout. We all wanted more bridges and trestles, but there wasn't time to build them. Luckily for us, lots of people have many more buildings than they can use, so we got enough buildings to suit us.

We wanted to have drought-tolerant plants, to fit with the times. Larry, Lamont and I went plant shopping a couple times, and the shelves that had been jammed with drought-tolerant plants a couple months ago were bare. We gave up on that idea and bought a few of everything that looked vaguely tree-like. We also went plant shopping individually, and bought more. None of this was enough. Bonnie and Amie had to run out on the last Saturday of the build season and buy several flats of ground cover to fill in, and I ended up buying another dozen plants after we were "finished" planting because there were still a number of bare areas. The problem with all of this is that all the plants were about the same size, and the judges marked us down because of it. I asked what the difference was between our second place, and first place. The answer was that we needed more variation in plant sizes.

Another problem was not prototyping new techniques in advance. Larry had a very interesting idea for building the waterfall, river and lake out of fiberglass. Now, keep in mind that the river was 17 feet long and the lake was about 6 feet by 3, and a foot and a half deep. It was big. The recipe on the fiberglass kit said to mix a quarter cup of epoxy with six drops of hardener, and use it all in ten minutes. Ummm... OK. How many batches do we need? It didn't say. What happens to the setting time if you scale the batches up to, say, a quart? Didn't say. We abandoned that idea, and went on to Plan B And C. We only got it done because another exhibitor came over and offered some advice.

Although we gave away more than 300 business cards, we have had only about 40 more visitors to our web site since the start of the fair. Instead of business cards, we could have a larger sign they can photograph. In 2019, we had a sign-up list, and we called them. That worked well, and we got several new members. We also had a large QR code that took viewers directly to our web site. I didn't see anyone use it, and I'm not sure how many people would spend time on our web site at the Fair. I wouldn't do it again.

I don't think the lake added enough to the scene to justify its very large size. There wasn't a sawmill, or dock, or boats or beach or anything to tie the lake to the railroad. Also, it was lined with an odd assortment of mostly smooth round rocks, because that was what we had. Real lakes don't look like that, and it made it impossible to have anything on the shore, because there wasn't any shore.

Access to the back of the layout was very restricted, and many of our volunteers were not comfortable getting up on it. Luckily, this year's layout was much better built than 2019, and we had very few problems with derailments.

Although the layout could take any size locomotive and cars, transporting them to and from the fair was too complicated, and most people didn't bother. Most of the trains were there the whole run of the fair. That's not good, because most companies don't design their products to run continuously for that long. Two locomotives and several cars had to be retired early.

2023

Yes, we are going to have a Fair layout in 2023. We are considering an area that is about half again larger than this year. It is more visible to people cutting through Floriculture, but is farther away from the beer garden, assuming they even have it next year.

We want to go higher next year, possibly a logging incline or funicular railroad. Sal Mele has one, and was kind enough to share his thoughts on it. His main advice was to start as soon as possible.

We also want to get a vendor's parking permit so we can park in the back of the fairgrounds, directly behind Floriculture, and wheel our trains in easily.

Since the new layout will require several bridges and trestles, we are going to ask members very soon if they can build one or more of them. There will also be sign-up sheets well in advance for work parties.

Probably the biggest change is that we are going to have a Fair Layout Committee, with me as the chair. It wasn't my idea, blame John Lyans for suggesting it, and everyone else for voting for it.

Gary

John Ryan's Goleta Depot Meet

Saturday I was at the Goleta Depot running trains. Other club members there were John Ryan, Randy Bryie, Nick Conti, and Mary Heumphreus. Kind of a usual turnout of visitors with a family coming by every few minutes. The depot did provide pizza and beer and it was a nice day to sit out and run trains.

Bill Fincher







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October Meet

The October meet will be at Georges and Marie Arsenault. Georges has a huge railroad that covers most of his backyard. The curves are wide and the railroad is set up for some track power. Battery power works the best. Some of the turnouts can be challenging for large engines. Georges also has a ride-on railroad and that is always a good time. The Halloween theme with games and a pinata are a blast for everyone. See you there!



Georges latest cabinet project for his Big Iron!



EBT mainline in Three Springs, Pennsylvania

Walt sent some pictures of this little work train gem. There was no description but the pictures pretty much tell the story. What a creative guy!
Thanks Walt

FROM THE
SHOP OF
WALT
THOMPSON





Bill Fincher

The G Scale society Journal published five of my pictures in the Autumn 2022 issue covering two full pages. I tried scanning the magazine pages but my scanner is not cooperating. The pictures are attached. They also put one on their site.

<https://gscalesociety.com/the-gscale-society/g-scale-journal-magazine/>







Bill has worked on his Shay and now it is working really well! Sweet engine.

Bill visited the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum, across the street from the Stasburg Railroad



We've seen lots of structures on our Garden Railroads, everything from stores, houses, barns and saloons. Is anyone up to build a model of a gunpowder factory? I bet you would have something unique.

Bill Fincher visited the Du Pont black powder factory located on the Brandywine River in Wilmington, Delaware, near Philadelphia. From Bill, " This is the powder factory I mentioned yesterday. It is worth a visit if you are in the Philadelphia area. The factory was all water powered. They had a rail system to transport the powder that I think was horse powered. We were there in May 2009, a few pictures are attached.

<https://www.hagley.org/plan-your-visit/what-to-see/exhibits/powder-yard>







Then you could have a blast!





CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST GARDEN RAILROAD SOCIETY 2022 SPECIAL EDITION — GARDEN RAILROAD OPEN DAYS

CELEBRATING GARDEN RAILROADS IN SOUTHERN MONTEREY, SAN LUIS OBISPO AND NORTHERN SANTA BARBARA COUNTIES SINCE 1985

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2022 CENTRAL COAST RAILROAD FESTIVAL



CCCGRS is delighted to again participate in this regional railroading festival. Festival participants are invited to visit seven distinctly different large scale model railroads over the two-day event.

SATURDAY, 08-OCT-2022

- **Garden Railroad Display at the [San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum](#)** **10:00 AM—4:00 PM**
[1940 Santa Barbara Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA](#)
This point-to-point layout will feature whimsical “egg liners”, a popular, small railcar available in dozens of colors, patterns and themes. Be sure to browse the swap meet of garden railroad treasures.
- **[Conejo & Tortuga Railroad](#)** **11:00 AM—3:00 PM**
[548 Moss Avenue, Paso Robles, CA](#)
Welcome to the Town of Dirt! Since 2007, Bernie and Vicki Meister have created this free-lance western theme garden railway. The mainline is now expanded crossing 3 arch truss bridges to the silver mine!
- **[Cascade Peak & Buena Vista Railway](#)** **10:00 AM—3:00 PM**
[6450 Park Hill Road, Santa Margarita, CA](#)
The Edwards welcome festival guests to this Disney Parks inspired garden railway. Guests are encouraged to explore the miniature landscape. The more time you spend, the more you see and hear!
- **Garden Railroad Display at the [Norgrove Railway](#)** **10:00 AM—4:00 PM**
[2449 Brady Lane, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420](#)
While visiting the popular Davenport trench locomotive at the Norgrove Railway, stop inside the machine shop and greet CCCGRS members operating large-scale model trains for your enjoyment.

SUNDAY, 09-OCT-2022

- **[Cascade Peak & Buena Vista Railway](#)** **10:00 AM—3:00 PM**
[6450 Park Hill Road, Santa Margarita, CA](#)
 - **Garden Railroad Display at the [Norgrove Railway](#)** **10:00 AM—4:00 PM**
[2449 Brady Lane, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420](#)
 - **[J & W Railroad](#)** **10:00 AM—3:00 PM**
[4301 Heather Circle, Santa Maria, CA](#)
Walt and Julie Wajda invite you to celebrate the autumn season on-board one of the longest continuously operating garden railroads on the central coast. See three separate loops of trains in action.
 - **[Orcutt & Islay Creek Railroad](#)** **10:00 AM—3:00 PM**
[246 Eastbourne Terrace, Santa Maria, CA](#)
Experience the sights, sound and smell of live steam locomotives operating on Geoff and Heather Clinton’s railroad. Narrow and standard gauge steam locomotives will be on display during the event.
 - **[Mountain View Railroad](#)** **Noon—4:00 PM**
[1905 View Road, Santa Ynez, CA 93460](#)
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