

# Santa Clarita Valley Garden Railroad Club



## NEWSLETTER

Santa Clarita, California

August, 2010

### August Meeting

Sunday, August 29, 2010

1:30 pm

At home of Scott & Aletha Miller

1132 Hut Court, Frazier Park, CA 93225

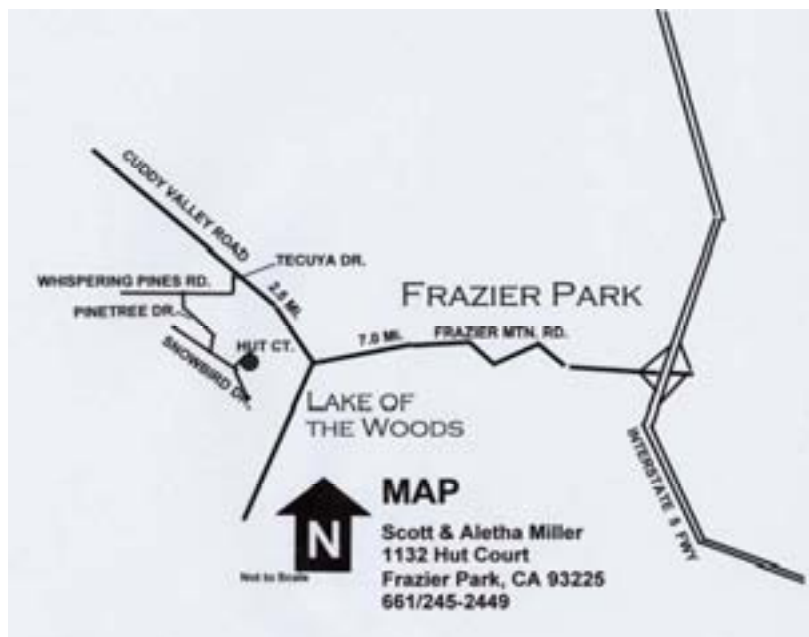
661-245-2449

**NOTE THAT THIS IS A SUNDAY AND IT WILL BE A POT LUCK.** Notice sent to members for food choice of those attending. We will confirm the choices as soon as we receive the responses. Please email Alan at [adwright@ca.rr.com](mailto:adwright@ca.rr.com) or call 661-287-0026. Visitors are welcome, just let us know that you plan to come.

#### DIRECTIONS

The Frazier Park exit is located about 36 miles north of Valencia on the I-5 Grapevine. The exit will be Frazier Mountain Road. Go about 7 miles west to Cuddy Valley Road which will be right at the fork. Go another 2.5 miles and turn left on Tecuya Drive. After 0.1 mile it turns right on Whispering Pines Road. Then turn left on Pinetree Drive and go 0.3 miles to Snowbird Drive. Turn left and Hut Court is about 0.1 miles on your left.

PARKING IS LIMITED, BUT YOU CAN PARK BEHIND EACH CAR IN THE DRIVEWAY, CAREFUL NOT TO BLOCK ACCESS TO OTHER HOME USING SAME DRIVEWAY.



#### THE POT LUCK

I think this is our fourth year at the Millers and our pot lucks have been great. Rather than make assignments, we would like to hear from you about what you would like to bring. Pick from one of the three categories and respond to Alan Wright by email reply or by phone at 661-287-0026 with your choice. We will call you and adjust if the response is too unbalanced. (1) Salads (2) Entrée's or main dishes, casseroles, etc. (3) Desserts. The hosts, Scott & Aletha Miller are furnishing the drinks.

## 2010 CALENDAR

- SEPTEMBER 27 **MEETING AT LAYOUT OF JOHN & MARIE NOZZI, Valencia, CA**  
**Monday**
- OCTOBER 24 **LOMITA RAILROAD MUSEUM, Lomita, CA**  
**Sunday**  
Display of steam locomotives, cars, water tower, re-creation of historic depot
- NOVEMBER 6-7 **SOUTHWEST GARDEN RAILROAD SHOW, Fairplex, Pomona, CA.**  
**Sat.—Sun.**  
All large scale show.
- NOVEMBER (TBD) **MEETING DATE AND LOCATION TO BE DETERMINED.**

### ON TRACK by Alan Wright

The club receives several newsletters published by other clubs, with most in digital form. I forward these to members who request it and I think this must include nearly half of the membership now. If you are not now on the list but would like to be added just let me know.

From the San Diego GRS newsletter I noticed they are recruiting members to fill committees for their up-coming 2012 Western Regional. San Diego last hosted a Western Regional about 6 years ago and it was very well done and interesting. Some of you may remember that our club became part of that when we included six garden railroad open houses to be visited by those driving down from the north to San Diego.

A Western Regional in San Diego is a great opportunity for those who can't get to a National Convention but would find San Diego convenient. We don't have firm dates yet, but plan to attend in 2012.

I regret to announce that long time members, **Dan & Debbie Goetz** will be moving and leaving the area for Arizona. Dan is making a job change and their home is now on the market. They are breaking down their fabulous railroad and there are a number of things that will be offered to members, including rocks, some plants and other stuff. When details are available members will be notified.

Donna and I weren't able to attend the Convention this year in Tacoma and wish we could have been there. We attended the Convention in Seattle in 2001 and thought it was an exceptional experience. We had three members attend this year: **Don & Dodie Pilling, Ray and Martie Smith, Gary Woolard & Carla Breitner.** On their return I asked each for some comments about the Convention ***Comments from Gary and photos from Carla begin on page 4.***

### CONVENTION COMMENTS Don & Dodie Pilling

We are very glad we went to this Portland/Tacoma event. Very green and lots of trees, and very large lots for their layouts. Most unique item was the gates the owners made to look like the front of a steam train, or the caboose. One layout had a beach scene, bears climbing a tree and figures playing horseshoes. In the Portland area Don liked Chesney, fantastic underground layout, then into a large RV garage with wall of trains, cars, etc. (also a wet bar, jukebox), then outside for another layout. My choice was Tom Miller's, a 20 acre farm with 2 miles of double track (and trestle) for his 6 steam engines that you could ride. The huge barn with fantastic layout, automatic lighting for nighttime scenes and a mezzanine with a large American Flyer layout. (and a wall of trains, cars, etc.). There was another large barn for workshop & his steam engines. He said his grandchildren really loved it all. (I can believe it).

On Sunday, we took the "Portland Spirit" brunch cruise—it was fun. We saw three layouts. The BBQ was OK, had to ride the train to a large warehouse with only one food line (lots of people). We then had to take the train back to the station and could have continued for a short ride to Snoqualmie Falls. (we had visited the falls before the BBQ, so did not take the ride.). We left of Saturday, did not see more layouts.

### SANTA CLARITA VALLEY GARDEN RAILROAD CLUB

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President & Editor	Alan Wright
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Photographers:	Debbie Goetz Carla Breitner Tina Krystof
Internet Contact	Gary Woolard
Webmaster	Ben Curtis

### WORKING ON THE RAILROAD—LOS ANGELES TO SAN LUIS OBISPO

By Jim Kerschner

12:30 am and the phone rings and it's the crew dispatcher. He says 2:30 am on duty with #373. (hot shot containers & piggybacks out of shops yard), the same yard you start out when going to Bakersfield. I have a regular coast Engineer position so I say OK, I'll be there at 2:30.

Tonight when I reported at the crew shack there was Caryl waiting to give the train crew and engineers a ride to shops yard. Yardmaster was in a hurry to get the train out of his yard so he had Hoslers take the power to shops yard to save time. Upon arrival at the shops yard still have to go through the units check switches, lights, cables all set up for road service. Then make the air test on power and power test both directions. I call the yardmaster on the radio and inform him we are ready to couple to the train. He gives permission and I call the yardmaster back that we are ready for the air test on the train.

The car department shows up to give the air test which means we set brakes on the train and they drive length of train to verify all the brakes are set on all cars. It has to be 100% before leaving the terminal. I call the yardmaster and tell him we are ready to go. The yardmaster tells the herder to line us out and the herder gives us the hand signal to proceed to ABS signal to depart. We have 60 loads and four units with no hazmat cars.

When I coupled to the train to do my walk forward on the ground I encountered three guys that wanted to ride. I informed them that this was not permitted. I knew all the units were locked, except the third car where I had to use a flag stick on the rear door because the lock was missing.

I got the green signal and we started our trip at 3:40 am (only saved about 20 minutes). I read the orders and there were no restrictions so we wanted to make Santa Barbara for #374 and with no delays we have it made. Got a green light out of Burbank Junction and a flashing yellow leaving Chatsworth. The next signal was green so I commented that somebody must have lined behind to clear that signal. Yep, when we got to Santa Susanna west bound was in the clear and rolled by us and gave us a hi ball. I was glad that guy didn't give us any more color than just the flasher.

We will stay in dynamic braking until we leave Camarillo. Got a green signal at Camarillo and we start to stretch the slick out of the train to make a run for Santa Barbara. There is another east bound in the hole at Oxnard that rolls us by and give us a hi ball. We like all these roll bys that tells us everything is OK with the train. Leaving Seacliff on a green we know we are going to make it. On the radio we hear mobile trainmaster calling head end of #374. That tells us to watch our speed because they are out checking this morning.

We get a flashing yellow at West Santa Barbara and by the time we get there it turns green. #374 is in the clear on double track so we keep on chugging. Surf is the next train order station that could nail us so we get back up to speed at 55 mph. At Surf we got another green board (means no orders. I looked back on the curve leaving Surf and saw somebody sittin the engineer seat sleeping on the third unit. I called Guadalupe yard office to have police met us there. Coming down Shurman Grade to Guadalupe I was in dynamic braking and when I stopped I got off to give my keys to police, but left engines in dynamic braking set up so they would stay reved up to run three. Two police and one dog got three guys from shops yard with not shots fired. I climbed back on seat box and whistled off and waved to three males 20 to 25 in the back of a squad car.

We departed on a green signal and got the train up to speed with no more delays to get to San Luis Obispo in 35 minutes. Turned in reports and went to hotel to wait for call to return. Off duty at 8:55.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This is the second piece written by Jim describing his work as an Engineer for the Southern Pacific Railroad. He worked his way up in the railroad with a number of positions before being promoted to Engineer in 1974, a position he held until his retirement in 2004. He and his wife Sylvia live in Santa Clarita.



## CONVENTION COMMENTS

Comments: Gary Woolard Photos: Carla Breitner

It would be impossible to survey even a fraction of the 80 layouts which were open for the 26th National Garden Railroad Convention, so let's try something different—a peek-a-boo glimpse of four widely varying layouts, each one sorta extreme in it's own way. Two are indoor layouts and two are outside.

The first is Tom Miller's by-now famous Little Colorado Railroad, the 1:20.3 tribute to Colorado railroading. It's built on traditional benchwork and scenicked with foam and all the traditional techniques of the smaller gauges. But because it's G-scale, it needs a warehouse to house the whole layout, including an inside 2nd floor viewing platform.



The sad irony is that Tom Miller is bored with it. He makes no secret that now that it's built, he's done with it. The layout only runs at times like the convention, or when his grandchildren come to visit. Miller is seriously considering selling the whole place, including a jhouse, machine shop and very extensive ride-on railroad.



If you don't have a warehouse to run your live steam, maybe you could try Mike Bennett's "Urban Railroad" solution—put a small track on the third floor deck of your downtown Seattle condo.

**It's the same stuff. It's moss, and it will grow everywhere in the damp shadows of the Northwest. And that's why a trend that we saw beginning during the Seattle Convention nine years ago has reached pandemic proportions. Battery powered radio control has taken over! If I had to assign rough proportions, I'd say that 70% of the layouts were battery R/C (mostly RCS), 15% live steam, 10% DCC and 5% traditional track power.**

## CONVENTION COMMENTS



Larry Stavers has a completely different approach to an indoor layout. “Stavers Locomotives” occupies a 16,000 square foot warehouse in an industrial section of Portland and it contains a traditional, waist-high live steam track that swoops in large curves around and between the girders and posts for easily a thousand feet—and an extension is being built out the back door for outside running.



What if you have a large back yard, but it slopes steeply down to the street below? You do “extensive landscaping”, according to Marshall Rose, and create an “operations” layout on terraces, with over 500 feet of mainline that climbs more than 7 feet, accesses three mines, logging, lumber and coal operations, and services more than 25 industrial & passenger stops. The “Triple Falls Lumber & Mining Co. Railroad” appeared in the pages of Garden Railways a few issues back, where it illustrated that a layout focusing on operations could be beautiful as well.

