Volume 7 - Issue 8

Voice of Train Mountain & Volunteers

Train Mountain Gazette

November 2026



A long-lost twin, deer, an origin story, a Containerville update, new signals, and MORE!

A Letter From The Editor

I saw the first Christmas decorations up in town today and can't help but wonder in the most cliché of ways... where does the time go!?

This is the first "off season" issue of the Gazette I have worked on, and I was absolutely thrilled to watch articles coming in. It felt like the spirit of Train Mountain is alive and buzzing even after the planned meets have come to a close until next season.

And the buzzing is exciting! It feels like there are so many great things in the works for the future of Train Mountain and the year 2027!

Now, unrelated to trains... as the property has gone quiet and the air has gone cold, Jordan and I have the pleasure of crossing paths with a lovely herd of deer on the regular. We count somewhere between 10 and 14 depending on the day. And they are quite adorable and mystical creatures.

It's been lovely.
-Lila





Lila Swanberg
Gazette Editor
Member Since '25

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2027 Meet Schedule



Polar Bear

W: N/A
M: January 15th - January 18th



Spring Awakening

W: May 1st - May 6th
M: May 7th - May 9th



Narrow Gauge

W: May 29th - June 3rd
M: June 4th - June 6th



Operations

W: June 19th - June 22nd
M: June 23rd - June 27th



Hot August Nights

W: July 31st - August 5th
M: August 6th - August 8th



Big Build

W: September 4th - September 9th
M: September 10th - September 12th



Fall Colors

W: October 5th - October 7th
M: October 8th - October 11th



Next Full Moon: November 24th

Reminders to Members

By: Joyce Merwin

2027 is fast approaching!

The following are reminders to help pave the way into 2027:

- **2027 memberships are now available.** You can join or renew online, in the office, by phone or by mail. If you join or renew by mail, make sure your payment is for the current membership rate.
- **2027 All Meets Passes and Individual Meet registrations** are also available online or through the office now.
- **If you own one of the existing containers,** please be sure to pay your container space rent by January 1, 2027.
- **If you have volunteer hours to report** for any time you volunteered in 2026, but have not yet reported, please be sure to report your hours before the end of the year. You can report through your account online or through the office.
- **If you have an RV parked in Blue Caboose,** make sure to keep your RV spot paid up to date. You can pay online, by phone, by mail or in the office.

To renew or join, sign up for meets, report volunteer hours, are an existing container owner making a payment or have an RV parked in Blue Caboose: you can do so online at trainmountain.org.

Sign in to your account, click on “Members” at the top of the home page, then click on “My Account,” then select the item on the list that you want to pay for or to report volunteer hours. If you are not an existing member, you will need to click on “Join or Renew” under “Members” instead.

To pay or report by phone or mail:Joyce Merwin
Office Administrator
Member Since ‘14

Call 541-783-3030 or
Mail: Train Mountain Institute, Attn: Joyce
P.O. Box 438
Chiloquin, Oregon 97624



Joyce Merwin
Office Administrator
Member Since ‘14

We cannot accept checks, money orders or drafts from accounts drawn on a foreign bank. You can pay online, by phone or at Train Mountain.

2027 is Train Mountain’s 40th Anniversary Year! Let’s all make it a great one!

Quail Lane Containers Sign-up and Eligibility Process Explained

By: David Waterstreet

The following process will be used by the TMI Board for the acquisition of new containers by Train Mountain (TM) members along Train Mountain Road in South Meadow.

Eligibility and interest list

Only TM members in good standing are eligible to purchase and maintain a container. The "Container List," now managed by Jeff Shelby, records members interested in obtaining a container. The list will be used to distribute future notices and applications once purchase commitments are announced after the first of next year.

Please ensure that TM has your current email address. To be added to the list or confirm that you are already on it, email Jeff Shelby at containers@tmrr.org. If you do not use email, call the TM office at 541-783-3030 and leave a message asking Jeff to return your call. The office will not be able to answer detailed questions about the container project.

Application and payment process

Once the design details and budget are finalized and container pricing is established, interested members on the list will be notified and invited to submit a formal application confirming their intent to purchase. A general announcement will also be made to the membership.

After an application is accepted and the member's 2027 membership is verified, the member must pay an initial minimum deposit of 50% of the purchase price and sign a purchase and lease agreement to retain eligibility for a container. A current, active annual TM membership is required for container purchase, ownership and access.

The date when agreements and deposits will begin to be accepted will be announced separately. This will be a paper-document process; forms will not be available for completion or submission on the TM website. Completed and signed documents may be submitted as email attachments to containers@tmrr.org when the time comes.

Continued

Payments will not be accepted with the initial application. Once the payment period is announced, payments may be made by mailed check or by check, card, or cash at the TM office. Payments will not be accepted before that announcement. Please note that we will add back the actual cost, roughly 2.9%, of card fees incurred for these large purchases.

An additional minimum payment of 25% will be due 15 days after construction begins; that specific date will also be announced. The final payment will be due prior to occupancy. If final payment is not made within 15 days of the final-payment announcement, the container contract may be voided and forfeited.

Cancellation of a purchase agreement will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and must be requested in writing to the TMI Board of Directors.

Allocation and resale

A member may purchase one container during the initial offering and construction period. The interest list currently contains more names than there are containers available. For this offering, multiple individual memberships within the same family unit will be treated as one membership for container-allocation purposes, in order to make containers available to as many member owners as possible.

If demand exceeds availability, selection will be based on the order in which signed agreements and deposits are received after the process is announced. If containers remain available after the initial deposit period, individual members may purchase a second container.

Containers must be retained for five years before they are eligible for resale. Ownership, conditions, restrictions, and resale are governed by the terms within the purchase contract.



David Waterstreet
TMI Board
Member Since 2003

Train Mountain's Safety Committee

By: Lindsay Eddy

In the last Train Mountain Gazette, we had an article "Rules of the Road". That article talked about getting our current Rules of the Road mounted on the display board which is just beyond Crisp Yard.

Those Rules of the Road are a great segue into this article. A few years back a Safety Committee for Train Mountain was formed. Our hobby, while safe, does have some risks.

The Safety Committee has a vision and mission. These are:

- Vision - To ensure a safe environment for the staff, members and visitors of Train Mountain.
- Mission - To identify and mitigate safety hazards through education, observation and improvement of policy and procedures.

I mentioned safety and risk. We all follow rules to make activities safer, riding a bicycle, hiking, driving a car or even walking up stairs have risks where we take precautions. We wear helmets, use hiking poles, wear seatbelts, use handrails, etc. Many activities also have rules we follow, speed limits, stop lights, etc. Our trains are no different.

Train Mountain wants to ensure everyone knows the Rules of the Road for operating trains. The Safety Committee has been tasked to review safety information to make sure it is communicated clearly and understood by all members.

Safety is always a priority! We need to protect people, our equipment and Train Mountain. In the coming months you may see more articles on safety in the Train Mountain Gazette.



Lindsay Eddy
TMI Board
Member Since '19

The Birth of the Ice Cream Social

By: Lila Swanberg

We just wrapped up our last ice cream social of the season, and it was a sweet one: my grandma's famous Texas chocolate sheet cake served with vanilla ice cream, homemade fudge, and your choice of chocolate sprinkles or crushed peanuts on top. The Fall Colors work week is the start of a new tradition, so I was worried there wouldn't be many in attendance. The turnout was pretty decent, though, and it was nice to treat those who were able to make it out for the work week.

Now, how did the ice cream social come to be a thing, you ask? Great question!

One evening on Jordan's and my nightly walk around the property, we got to talking about Ops Meet. Traditionally, there was a social held the Tuesday before Ops Meet to answer questions and talk through how the meet would go. Once Ops Meet switched over to using the Train Game for operations, the process became smoother and that social was no longer needed. Questions were handled on an individual basis instead. Richard Croll had the idea of turning that Tuesday night meeting into an ice cream social, but for one reason or another, it never got off the ground.

I mentioned to Jordan that it would be cool to see that happen, and the next thing I knew, he had volunteered me to host an Ops Meet ice cream social, with TMRR's blessing and support!

That first social probably had over 100 people. I had only prepared for 60, thanks to a faulty headcount (lol), but we made it work and it was a great time. We realized it was nice to have a social event. It brought people out and gave us a way to thank everyone for their volunteer efforts during the work week.



Lila Swanberg
Gazette Editor
Member Since '25

So we kept it going for the remaining meets of the season:

- an ice cream sundae social
- an ice cream float social
- an ice cream truck social (my personal favorite!)
- finally, the ice cream and chocolate cake social

They seem to have been a big hit, and they will continue for now as a new tradition.

While I did all the planning for these socials, I had a whole bunch of support and help from our local ladies at each one. A special thanks to Cheryl McInnes, Lindsay Eddy, Ann Morgan, & Theresa Shelby plus everyone else who came and lent a hand.

If anyone is interested in helping with planning and executing these events next season please let me know! My schedule grows busier and busier and having some more hands involved would be great.

Email: thelivingwellnesslounge@gmail.com

-Lila



Signal Project

By: John Cooper

The signal project at the west end of Main Yard has been completed. Earlier this season, a full-size replica of a Pennsylvania Railroad pedestal signal was installed protecting the crossover from the main track into the yard. The PRR dwarf that had previously been in that location was moved about 50 feet west onto the Wedding Cake track but was not wired at the time. This signal has now been connected to the control circuitry and protects the merge with the main track.

The dwarf will display an Approach or Clear depending upon the pedestal signal's indication. If trains are approaching this location simultaneously from the 6-Acre Loop and the Wedding Cake, both trains will see Restricting indications. The below photo shows a clear on the dwarf and a clear on the pedestal signal in the distance.





John Cooper
Signal Guru
Member since '04

Support Train Mountain Institute with a Gift from Your IRA

By: Mark Flitton

Support Train Mountain Institute with a Gift from Your IRA

As you plan your year-end financial and charitable goals, there is a powerful way to support Train Mountain Institute, while maximizing your tax benefits. If you are 70½ or older, you can make a direct impact on our mission to preserve, protect, and educate the public about railroad history through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

If you are already taking Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs), a QCD can count toward your requirement. If you are 70½ but have not yet reached RMD age, you can still use this QCD strategy.

The Tax Advantage of a QCD

When you take a traditional RMD, that distribution is counted as taxable income, which can potentially push you into a higher tax bracket or impact your Medicare premiums. However, by directing your RMD (or a portion of it) to a qualified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization like Train Mountain Institute, the funds go directly to us completely **tax-free**.

- **Reduce Your Taxable Income:** The amount transferred directly from your IRA to Train Mountain Institute satisfies your RMD requirement for the year but is excluded from your adjusted gross income (AGI).
- **No Itemizing Required:** You do not need to itemize your deductions to claim this benefit. Even if you take the standard deduction, you still receive the tax break.
- **Maximize Your Impact:** Because the distribution is tax-free, 100% of your donation goes directly toward keeping our tracks clear, maintaining our rolling stock, and expanding our educational programs.

Continued

How to Make a Gift from Your IRA

To ensure your donation qualifies for these tax benefits, the transfer must be made directly from your IRA administrator to Train Mountain Institute. Your gift must leave your IRA by December 31, 2026, so please contact your custodian early to allow time for processing.

1. Contact your IRA custodian and request a "Qualified Charitable Distribution" form. If you are taking an RMD this year, make your QCD before withdrawing the rest of it.
2. Designate Train Mountain Institute as the recipient.
3. Specify the amount you wish to transfer. You can contribute any amount up to $111,000 per year (or the current indexed limit) as a QCD.
4. Let us know when you request your QCD so we can identify your gift and send a written acknowledgment for your tax records.
5. Tell your tax preparer about your QCD, because it must be reported correctly on your return.

QCDs cannot come from 401(k) or 403(b) plans, and they cannot be used for membership dues, event fees, or anything else that provides a benefit in return.

Note: Please consult with your financial advisor or tax professional to ensure a QCD aligns with your overall financial strategy and to verify your specific RMD deadlines.

Your generosity ensures that the world's largest backyard railroad continues to educate and inspire future generations of rail enthusiasts. Thank you for keeping Train Mountain Institute moving forward!

If you would like to discuss a QCD or need our specific tax identification number and mailing address for your IRA custodian, please reply to this newsletter or contact our development office directly. We are happy to help!



Mark Flinton
TMI Board
Member Since '96

Camera Corner

By: Dennis Matzen

I **Wish I Had That Photo!**

I have had numerous requests on how to download the picture from the Train Mountain cameras pages to a user's phone, computer or other device. It is really very simple. Here are the steps:

1. When you locate a photo of interest on the Cameras page the first thing is to make sure to select the image to get the full-size image and not the "thumbnail". On all of the three camera pages click on the desired image. This will bring up the full-size image.

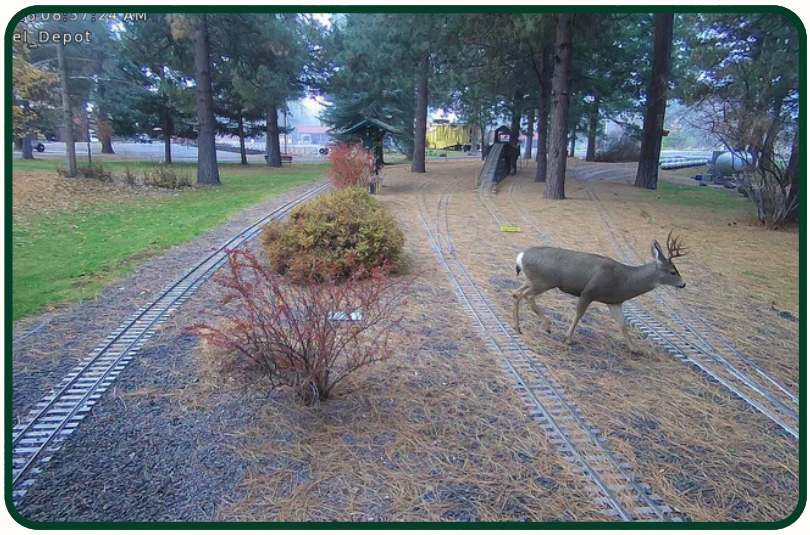
2. Next, depending on the device you are using to view the website, use one of the following to download the image.
   a. Using the mouse right-click on the image and select either the "download" or "save image as" options.
   b. Hold your finger for a second or two on the image. When you release your finger you will get options of what to do. Pick "download", "save" or similar option on your device.

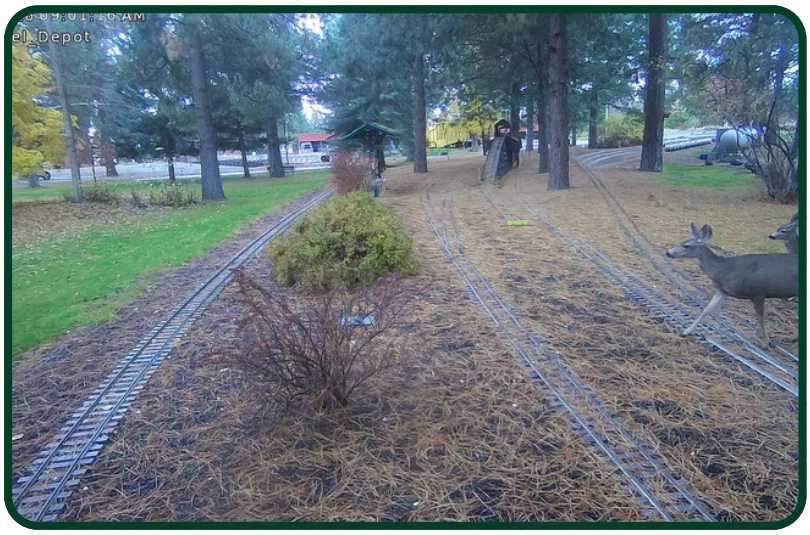
3. Look in your Downloads or Pictures folder on your device and you should see your picture.

4. Now you have it locally so you can email it, post it to your social media accounts or just admire it on your phone.



Dennis Matzen
IT Crew
Member Since '21



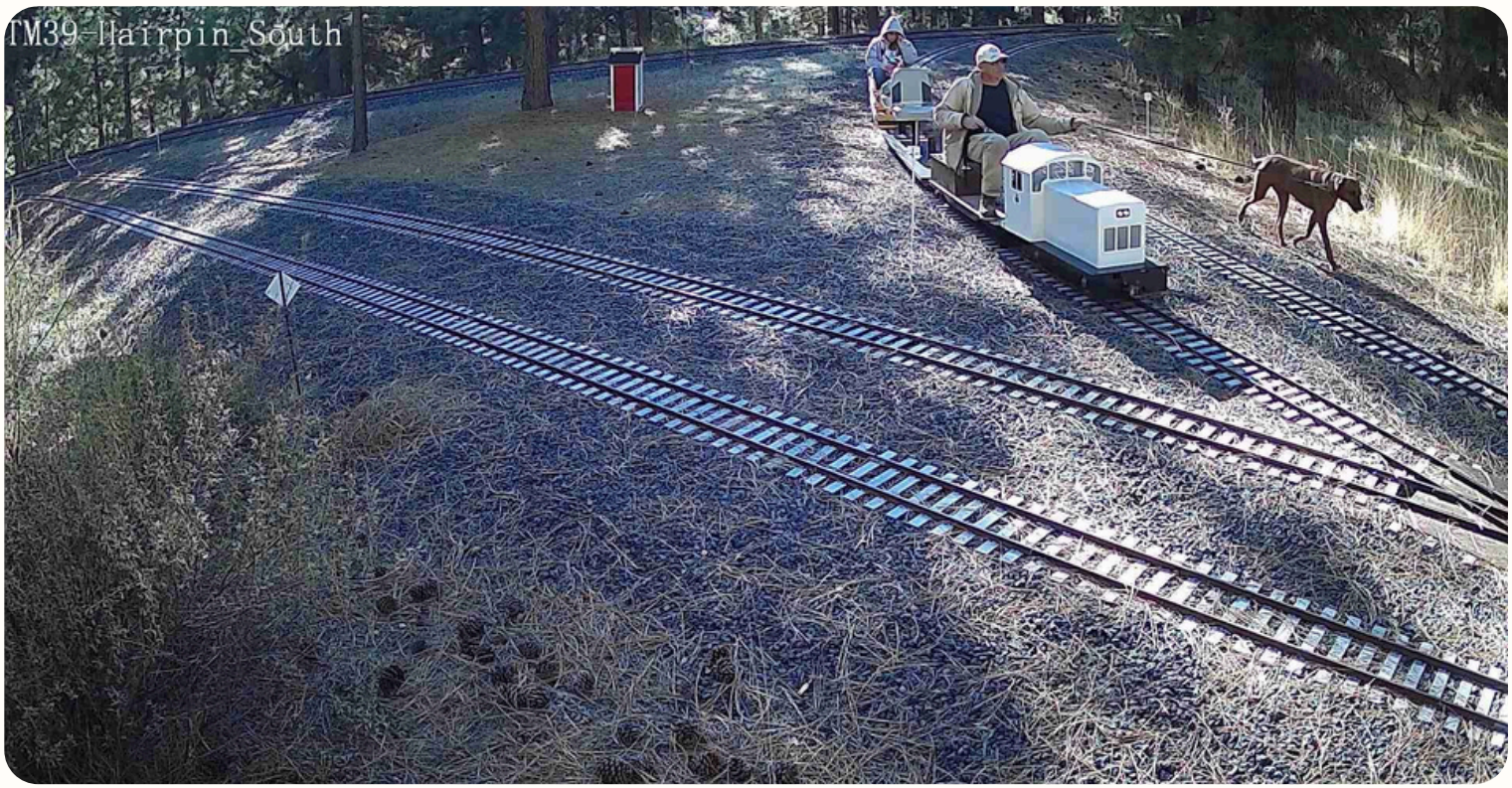


Our members and guests are gone so the wildlife is enjoying Train Mountain





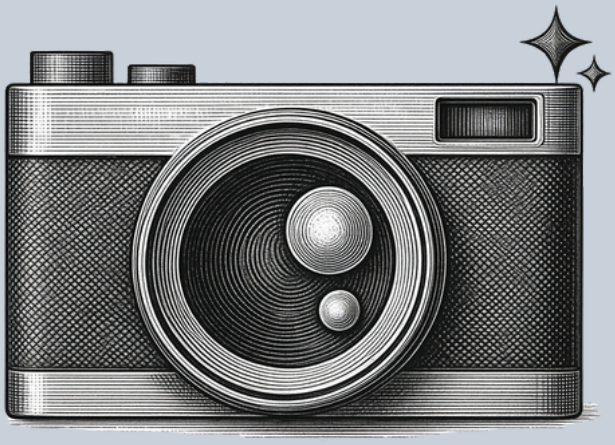




Some use solar for auxiliary power, others use "alternative" power sources

High Quality Photos Needed

The Visitor Center is looking for high resolution photos that we can enlarge to put in the center. These photos need to be of TM showing what Train Mountain is all about. Please make sure the photos are not blurry.
Please email them to me at cheryl@tmrr.org
Some suggestions:



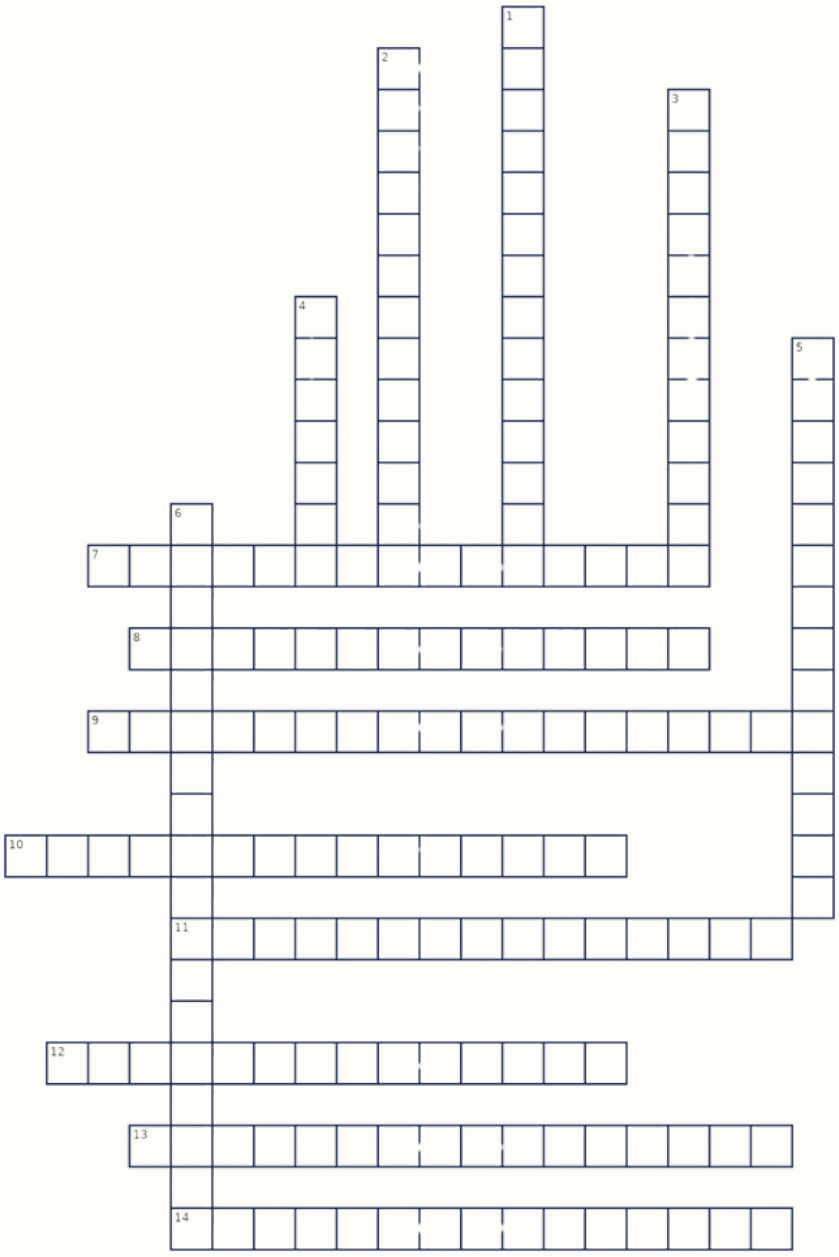
- Hope Circle
- Crane Siding
- Clyde Station
- Central Station
- Triennial - The Big Toot
- Photos of the different seasons.

Name of the photographer will be listed on the photo.

Please let Cheryl know if you have any questions.
Cheryl McInnes cheryl@tmrr.org

Thanks, Cheryl

Railroads



Across

7 SP
8 ARR
9 KCS
10 MP
11 NS
12 CP
13 WSLC
14 NP

Down

1 WP
2 GN
3 UP
4 SF
5 NYC
6 BN

Answers on Page 19



Mike Raypholtz
Member's Since '13

Talk Like a Railroader

Engine Edition

Last month we learned what railroad crews called each other. This month, it's all about the engines! Can you match this old-time slang to its meaning?

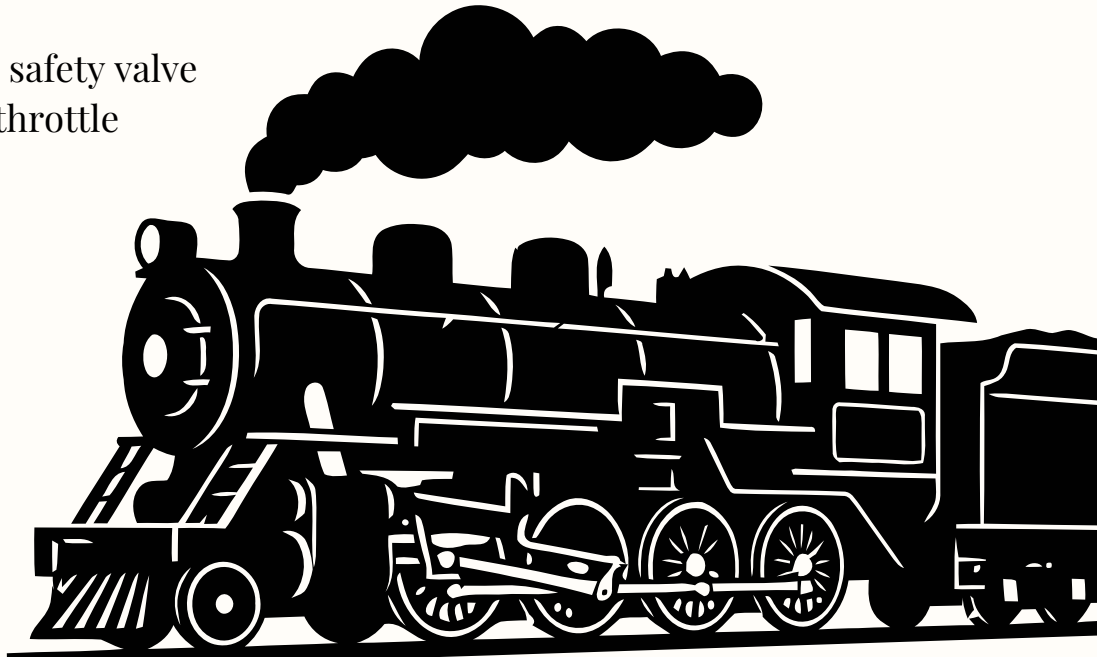
Slang

1. Tea Kettle
2. Battleship
3. Muzzle Loader
4. Walk the Dog
5. Down with Grandma
6. Water Pains
7. Wipe the Clock
8. White Feather
9. Hogger's Candle
10. Real Estate

Answers on the next page!

Meanings

A. Low grade coal
B. Running an engine at high speed
C. An old locomotive
D. An emergency stop
E. A hand fired locomotive
F. An inspection torch
G. An engine short of water
H. A large locomotive
I. A plume of steam over the safety valve
J. Working an engine at full throttle



Amusements

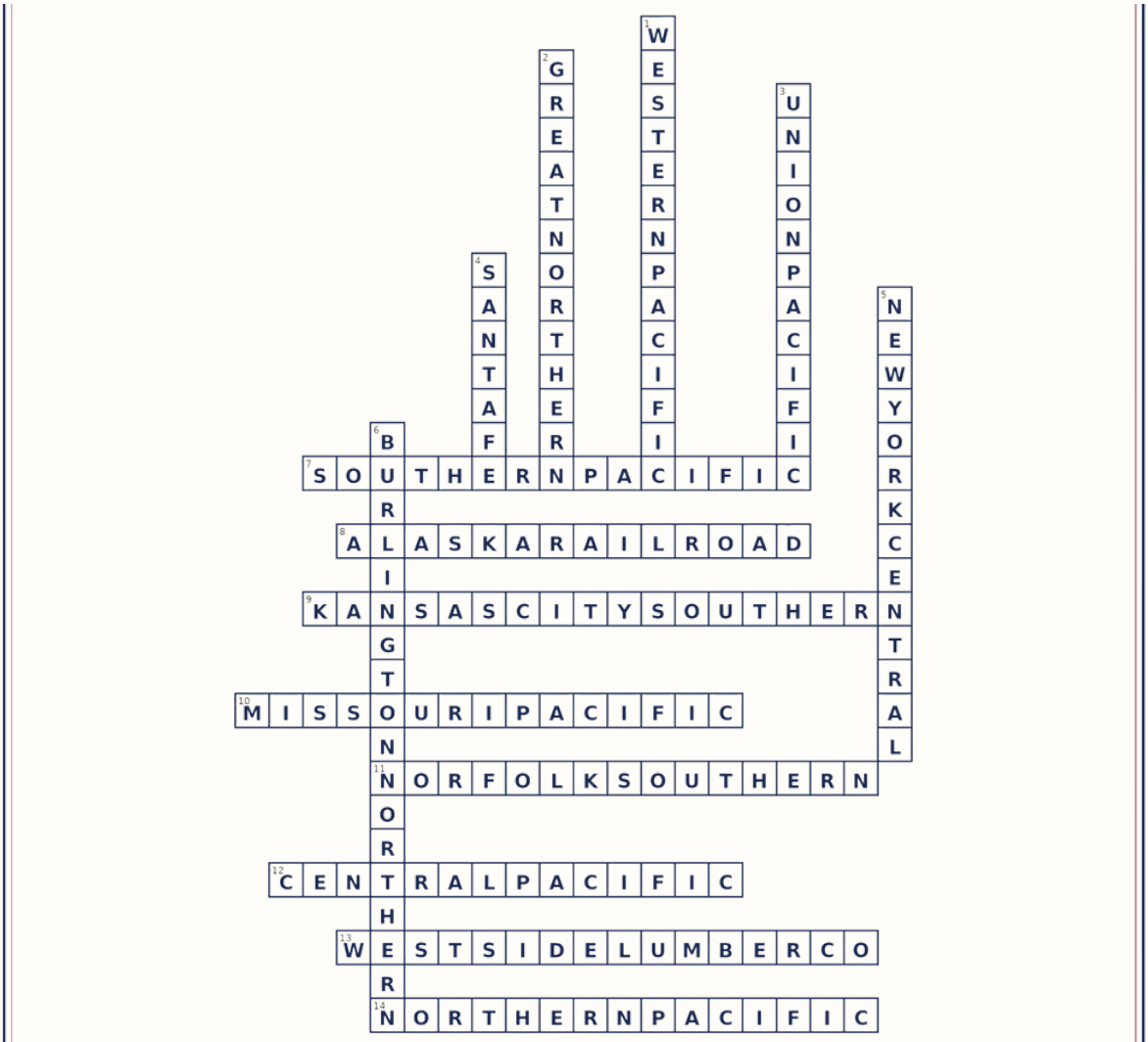
Talk Like A Railroder Answer Key

Answers: 1-C, 2-H, 3-E, 4-B, 5-J, 6-G, 7-D, 8-I, 9-F, 10-A

Did you know? Taking water "on the fly" meant scooping it up from a water pan between the rails without ever stopping the train. And if "Real Estate" was the low grade coal, the good stuff had a fancier name: "Black Diamonds."

Crossword Answer Key

Railroads



Across

7 SP
8 ARR
9 KCS
10 MP
11 NS
12 CP
13 WSLC
14 NP

Down

1 WP
2 GN
3 UP
4 SF
5 NYC
6 BN

Have You Seen My Twin?

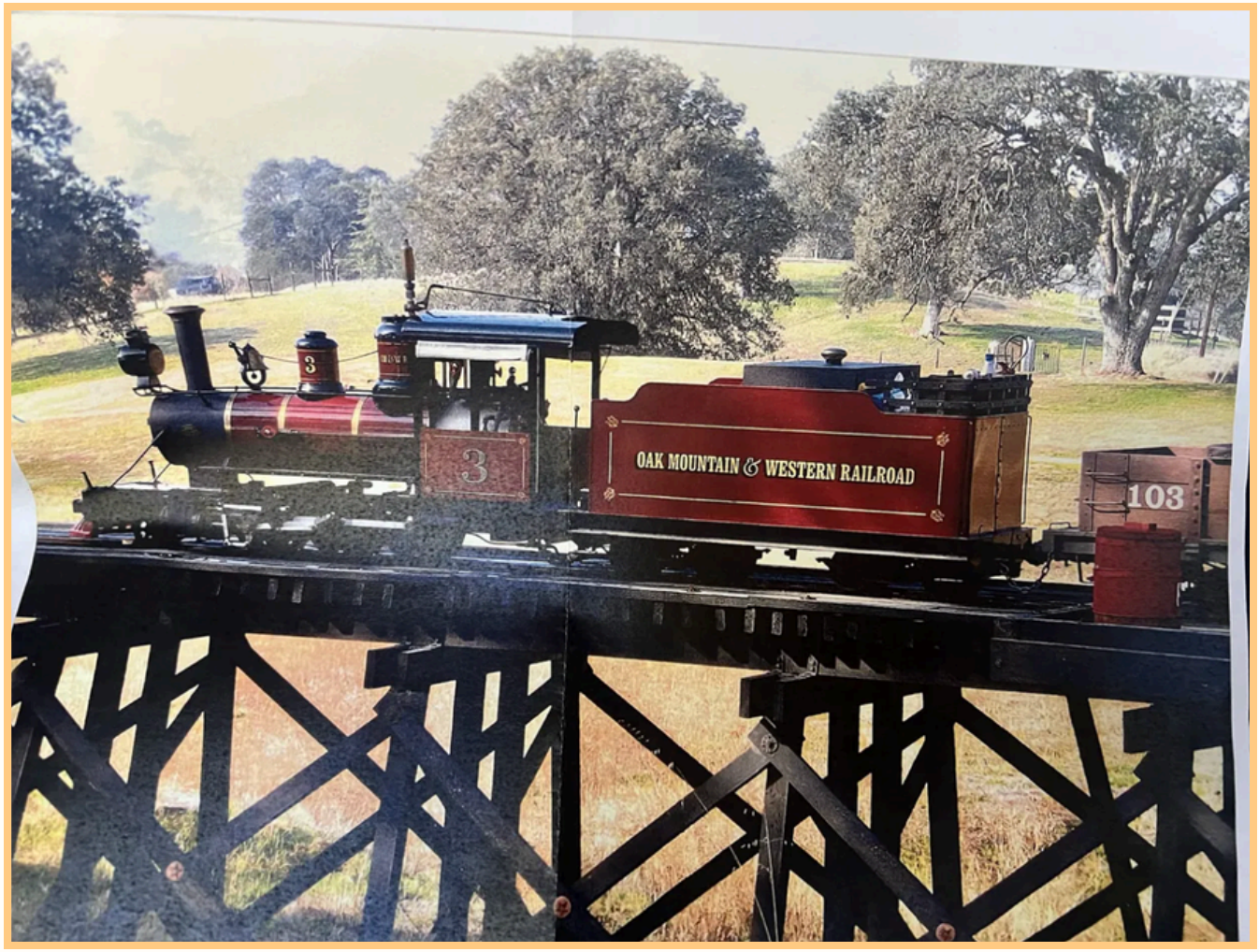


Hi, I am Trolley 44, and I am looking for my twin, Trolley No. 45.
The last known owners were Art and Loraine Watters of Lakeport, CA.
They ran at the Sacramento Live Steamers track. If you know where my twin is located, please give my builder, Bill Shepherd, a call at:

1 (707) 972-4989

P.S. I would like to be reunited if that is possible.

For Sale



Roll Models Mfg. No. 1 “Sweet Creek” 2-6-0

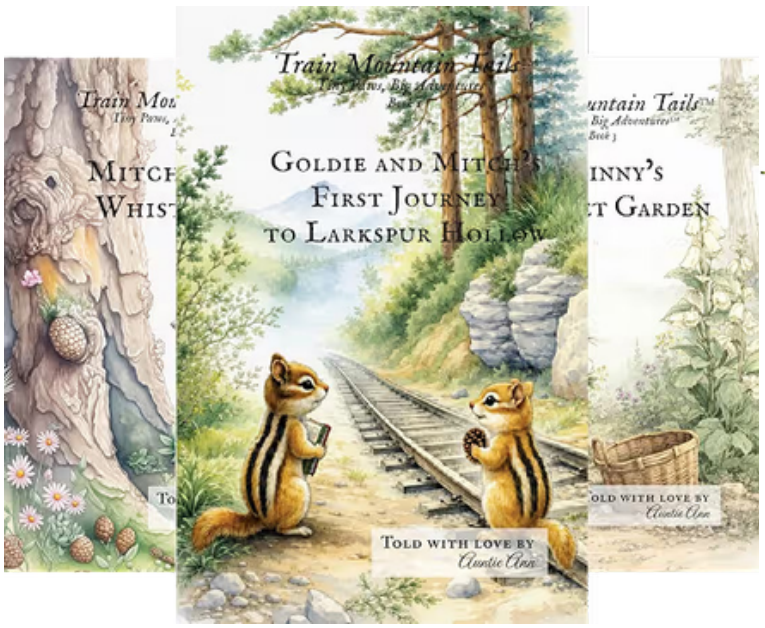
3¾" scale, runs on 7½" gauge track.
Briggs boiler, oil-fired, but can be converted to propane.
Make me an offer I can’t refuse!

Will deliver, or pick up at Train Mountain.
Contact:

Bill Shepherd: 707-972-4989
Mike Raypholtz: 559-285-8377 or mike@fresnoroofingco.net

Train Mountain Tails™

Tiny Paws, Big Adventures™

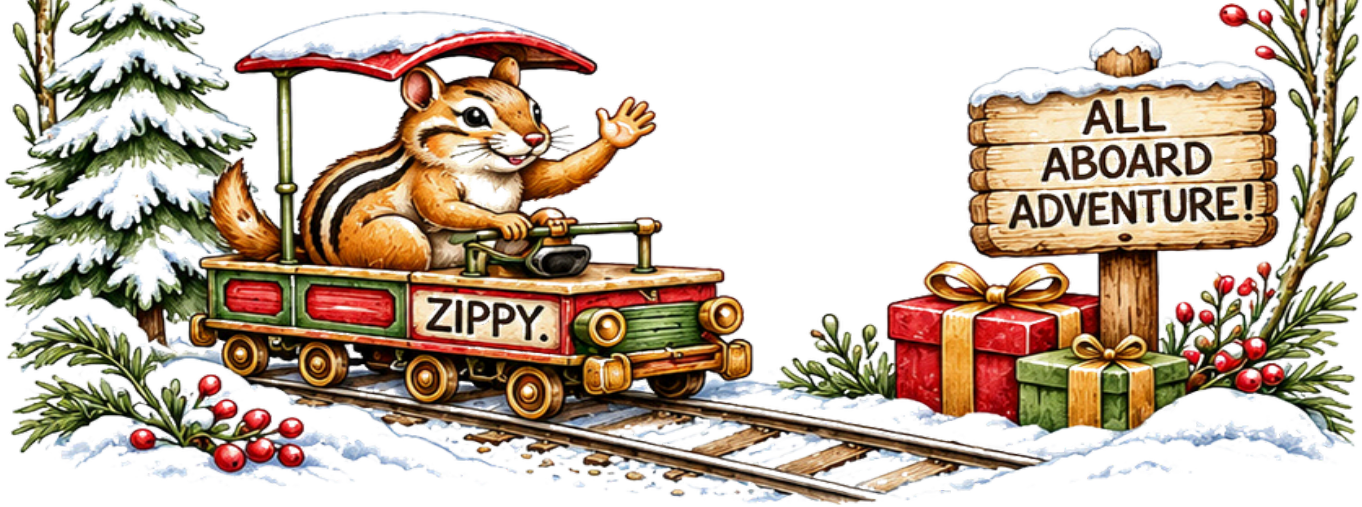


All Aboard for Christmas Adventures!

Give the gift of woodland wonder!

Stories to treasure.
Adventures to share.

Find the Perfect Gift at
www.trainmountaintails.com



2028 Meet Schedule

**Train Mountain Railroad 2028 Meet Schedule (revised proposed)*

Polar Bear Meet

- No work week
- Meet Friday January 14 through Monday January 17 (MLK Birthday)

Spring Awakening Meet

- Work Saturday April 29 through Thursday May 4
- Meet Friday May 5 through Sunday May 7

Narrow Gauge Meet

- Work Saturday May 27 through Thursday June 1 (Memorial Day)
- Meet Friday June 2 through Sunday June 4

Triennial Meet

- Work Saturday June 10 through Wednesday June 15
- Transition Day Friday June 16
- Meet Saturday June 17 through Sunday June 25

Operations Meet

- Work Saturday July 29 through Tuesday August 1
- Meet Wednesday August 2 through Sunday August 6

Big Build Meet

- Work Saturday September 2 through Thursday September 7 (Labor Day)
- Meet Friday September 8 through Sunday September 10

Fall Colors Meet

- Work Tuesday October 3 through Thursday October 5
- Meet Friday October 6 through Monday October 9 (Columbus Day)

Mark Your Calendar!

Interested in Contributing to the Gazette?

Reach out to Lila at

gazette@tmrr.org

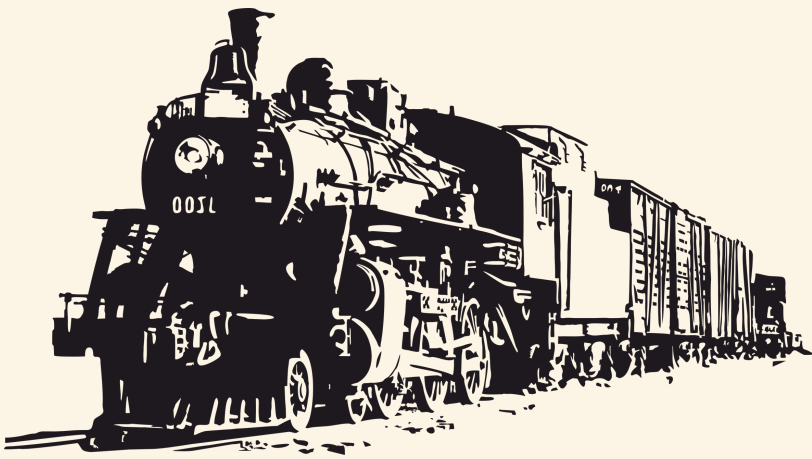
Contributions must be submitted by the 10th

And don't forget to stay connected between meets

Physical Location:
36941 South Chiloquin Road

Postal Address:
PO Box 438, Chiloquin, OR 97624

Email: info@tmrr.org
Phone: 541-783-3030



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