



## MARCH 2016

**Upcoming Events:**  
**March 19 11 AM**  
**Gary & Marilyn Siegel**

**Santa Barbara**  
**(805) 969-7687**  
**Track and Battery Power**  
**Eggliner Racing**

Please bring:  
A-G Salads  
H-O Desserts  
P-Z Appetizers

Future Meets:

April 2 Bryie  
April 9 Siegel OPS  
April 30 Morgan  
May 14 Siegel  
May 21 Raymond  
June 11 Power  
June 18 Morse

If you are interested in having a meet in 2016, contact **Jim Eldridge** at [sjeldridge@earthlink.net](mailto:sjeldridge@earthlink.net)

### Gary & Marilyn Siegel

Gary has accomplished the seemingly impossible in that their layout has gotten better and better every time we have visited. Every time we think he must surely be done. But, he isn't. What has he done since last time? You'll just have to come and see for yourself.

The main line is point to point, about 750 feet long, and has lots of sidings in case you are in the mood to work your way from end to end. The maximum grade is 1.5% and the curves are at least 8 1/2 feet radius. There are some very close tolerances in the tunnels. They will handle K-27s, but anything larger may leave some paint behind.

There are also two branch lines that would each be respectable layouts in any other back yard. They have steeper grades and sharper curves.

The track for Eggliners is a separate loop, or at least it was the last time we were there. Although there is a spot that clearly will have a bridge to the big layout some day. Has that day arrived? You will just have to go and see for yourself.

### Train OPS Sessions Ride Again

If you would like to do something more energetic than watching trains go around in circles, then an operating session might be just what you are looking for. Cars move from origination points to predetermined destinations on a schedule. There is paper work to

be filled out, and all that 1 to 1 railroading stuff. Sound like fun? **John Ryan** is putting a session together right now for April 9 at the Siegel's layout. Contact John at [jryan77836@aol.com](mailto:jryan77836@aol.com).

### February Meet/Work Party

Jane and I had our February work party just like in January. Unlike January, nobody took any pictures, so the write-up and pictures are missing in action. Jane and I would like to thank everyone who came, and especially Lynn Ledgerwood for another fascinating demonstration of how to turn ordinary cement into beautiful mountains.

Next month we get back to our regular schedule, and newsletter format, thank goodness.

### Model Trains on Google Maps

Last month I wrote about Google Maps adding the largest model train layout in the world, and said that I didn't know who had sent the article to me. **Sten Lindgren** wrote to say that he sent the original article. Thanks, Sten!!

### What's Old Is New Again

People are sending pictures of the world's longest chocolate train again. I ran a whole article in the February, 2013 newsletter; so I won't run it again. Thanks to everyone who sent it.



## Club Membership

We have 57 members right now, although there are a half dozen who may still renew. That is down from 65 last year, 69 in 2014, and 76 in 2013. There are rumors of more than 100 members in the earliest days; when the GCGRS was the first and only garden railroad club in Southern California, but no rosters survive from then. The earliest surviving complete roster is from 1989, and has 63 names. Five of them are still members: **David Manley, Gary Raymond, Steve Vendt, Randy Walker, and Jean Waterman**. In addition, **Bill Fraser**, who passed away just last year, was also a member then.

## Opening Some Previously Unopened Mail

### Gary Raymond

forwarded this photo of what is billed as a mile of Union Pacific locomotives sitting on a siding at Grand Junction, Colorado. An attached comment wondered if this is a leading economic indicator. Maybe, but an indicator of coal shipments seems more likely. Coal accounted for 18% of UP's business in 2014, and was down 26% in 2015, with a further decline expected in 2016, and into the future as long as natural gas prices stay low.



Gary also sent along some pictures of a train carved out of a pencil. The artist is **Cindy Chinn**, who more generally does paintings of cute animals but does have some experience carving wood, although much, much larger pieces. This piece took about nine hours and used a sharp knife for the general carving, and a needle for the very finest detail. The artist says that the trestle was harder than the train because the wood was very hard and brittle.



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## 1 to 1 Train Rides

Last year, some people sent pictures and articles about places they had visited and ridden trains. All of these have already appeared in previous issues. Thank you very much to **Bill Fincher, Lamont Stolley, and Steve Vendt** for sharing their experiences.

Several other people sent pictures, but no text to explain what we are looking at. Normally, I would not publicly embarrass anyone by calling them out in the newsletter, but the pictures were intriguing enough that I wanted to know more. So, here are a few samples.

One of those was **Sten Lindgren**, who very kindly sent



several pictures, including the one here on the left, from a trip through Sweden, but not a word about what the pictures are about. There are more, but this one is one to whet your

appetite.

**Crazy Charlie** sent some pictures, including this one which seems to be called Bank robbers, Fillmore, but looks more like the back of a Walmart.



**Deborah Mele** entranced me (and inspired this topic) by her rapturous description of a trip to New Orleans via Amtrak. But so far, she has sent neither text nor pictures.

Meanwhile, **Lamont Stolley** sent another picture of the Verde Canyon in Arizona, with the comment that he would



like to model this cliff on his layout. It's a real beauty, Lamont, and we look forward to seeing it on your layout.

## Mountain Building Part Two

If you are playing along at home, you now have a layer of cement coated burlap covering your framework. This month we turn that into hill sides and cliffs and stream beds and all that good mountain-y stuff.

You will need all of the same hardware as before, possibly minus the poultry netting and burlap. In addition, you will need some finishing tools.

First, you will need one or more "chip brushes". Also called natural bristle brushes, these are very cheap brushes, under \$2 for a two inch brush. You'll probably use a two or three inch brush mostly, and maybe a one inch for tight areas. Initially it is used to remove finger marks and to smooth the surface. Later on, you can use it to moisten the surface to prevent premature drying, and to add more cement to areas that need to be built up.

You will need some tools with a sharp point, and some with slightly broader points. A 16 penny nail is sharp enough. A wooden dowel with the end ground down a bit, or the handle from a worn out artist's paint brush, or even a piece of a tree branch works well for broader pointed tools.

Wire brushes are useful to create the characteristic layers of certain kinds of rock formations. Small brushes get into tight places, while larger ones can do a whole cliff in no time. I remove all but one row of bristles.

Natural sea sponges work well for creating a type of rock called conglomerate, which is formed by turning gravel back into rock.

Just pat the surface with the sponge.

Let's get to work. In the first picture, you can see the results from last time. Although I liked the appearance of the new section on the left,



that whole length of track across the entire picture needs something more. I added some additional variations in height by cutting out two places for future waterfalls. I also



wanted to add some height in the form of a mountain and a tunnel. After trying to juggle all the various pieces at once, I eventually built the tunnel first so that all I had to worry about was the in-

ternal clearances, while leaving the overall shape for later. This also made it easier to cover the inside of the tunnel with cement and burlap, as both sides were reachable. If you do this, you must fully support the arched shape of the tunnel. At first, I tried just holding it at the proper height with some bricks. The problem with that was that the sides collapsed anyway, and the result was too narrow for any of my trains. I solved it by making cardboard forms in the height and width that I wanted. No, it does not get soggy.

The finish coat of cement is made with the same plastic cement as before, only this time it is made with much less water. The proper consistency is very close to modeling clay, and will be very sticky. Make sure there is no dry cement at the bottom of the mixing bucket.

Soak the cemented burlap layer thoroughly. Small areas can be done with a spray bottle of plain water; large cliffs need a hose with a sprayer nozzle.

Add the cement in handfuls. Until you gain some expertise, it is easier to make this layer as even as possible. The thinnest part of the cement will set up first, and the most realistic effects are achieved at just about the point where it becomes too stiff to work at all. When you have an area covered, use the chip brush to smooth the layer out. "Smooth" is relative, you just want to get rid of finger marks, and all signs of human intervention.

Depending on whether the area is in sun or shade, and also on the temperature and humidity, you have anywhere from a half hour to all afternoon to work with it.



Cement dries by forming calcite crystals that get larger and join together as it dries. This means that a stroke that removes a small amount of cement will remove a lot more later on. You can slow the drying a bit by soaking the surface with the spray bottle.

Let it sit until the surface water evaporates before starting to work. The cement is still very soft, so cuts made now will sag a bit and have very soft edges. The same cut later on will hold its sharp edges. You can build up small areas by getting a glob of cement on a chip brush and brushing it on the surface. Naturally, this will also cover any fine detail you have already worked in. I really can't say too much else here, just start!

Let it dry for at least a week before painting. I use house paint, partly because it has UV inhibitors built-in to slow fading, and partly because it is much cheaper than artist's paint.

## GCGRS Membership Application Form

Membership in the Gold Coast Garden Railway Society is open to anyone who is interested in outdoor model railroading. Dues are \$20 per year to get a printed copy of the newsletter mailed to you; or \$10 if you can take the newsletter via email. New members, please add \$6 for each name tag that you want to have. Membership runs from January to December. Make checks payable to "**Bruce Kuebler for GCGRS**".

Bring this application and payment to any meet, or mail it to:

**Bruce Kuebler**  
**10908 Encino Dr**  
**Oak View CA 93022-9238**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Partner/Other(SPO) First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SPO Last Name, if different: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose \$20 because I love to receive a printed newsletter in the mail \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose \$10 because I want to get the newsletter two days earlier by email \_\_\_\_\_

I also need \_\_\_\_\_ name tags,  
pin type name tags \$6 each \_\_\_\_\_  
magnetic name tags \$8 each \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping and handling for name tags: \$4 per order \_\_\_\_\_

For new members:

Would you like some help designing and/or building your layout? (Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what would you like help with \_\_\_\_\_

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Please put "GCGRS"  
in the subject line of any  
correspondence.