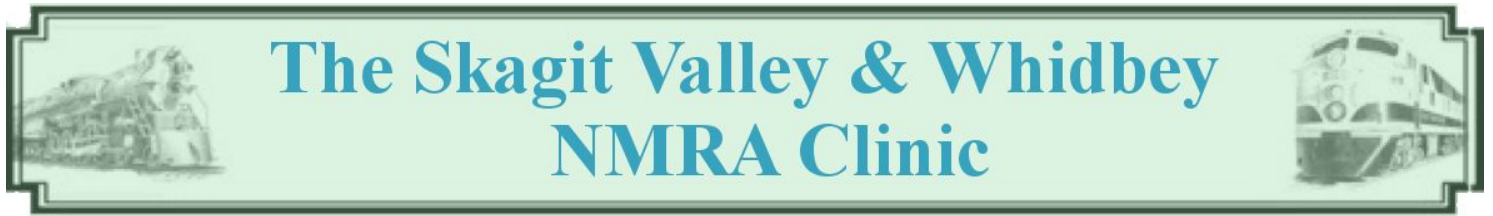


The 4th Division of the Pacific Northwest Region of the
National Model Railroad Association Presents



January 2021 Newsletter

Due to the quarantine the December (in person) clinic is **CANCELLED**. Even our pre clinic dinner would be inappropriate at this time.

The January clinic.

RUBBER ROCKS

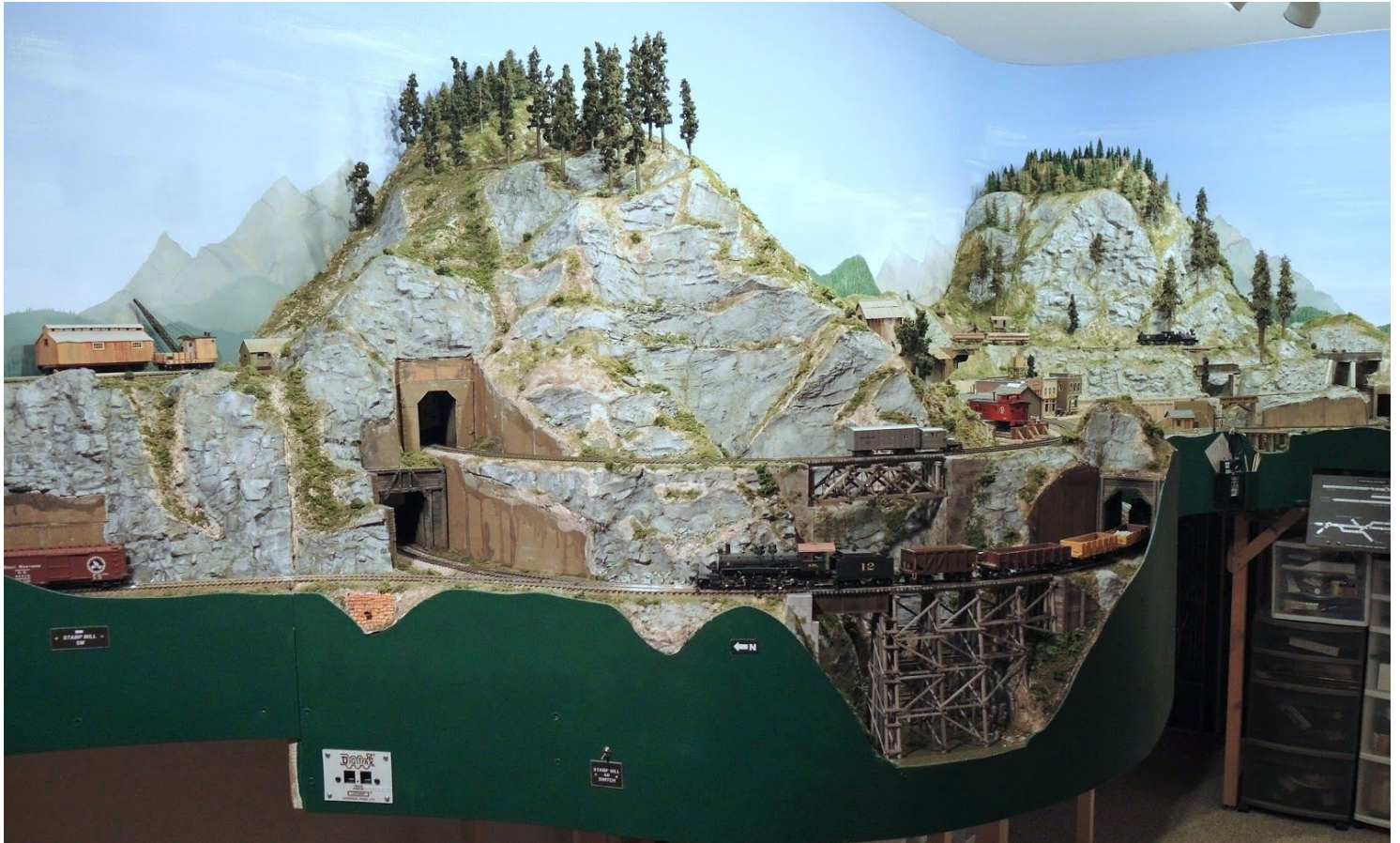
A Better Alternative, or at Least Another One?
by Rich Thom

Five years ago I presented a mini-clinic to the Skagit Valley & Whidbey clinic group about my initial trials of rubber rocks for scenicking my HO-scale Coldwater Creek & Cascade Railroad. I had purchased enough of the “rocks” to complete about one-third of my terrain. Compared with my past experience with conventional plaster castings, the rubber rocks were entirely different and presented a steep learning curve.



Shay 19 backs to pick up log loads beneath White Mountain. The granite outcroppings are rubber rocks.

I was pleased with the first results (see first photo) and decided to use the product—from Cripplebush Valley Models (www.cripplebush.net) --to complete the layout. In this updated clinic I will cover how I trimmed the rocks to size; attached them to my hardshell (itself different from what most modelers use); and most critically, colored them. I found coloring to be the biggest challenge and departure from staining plaster castings. I'll conclude with a comparison of advantages and disadvantages, and if you tune in, you can decide for yourself whether rubber rocks are a better alternative—or not!



Overall view of the rock work—all rubber rocks—on the clinic presenter's layout.

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At the December 2020 clinic!

DECEMBER CLINIC REPORT

We had our third online Zoom clinic presented by Alan Murray.

He presented a clinic on constructing the Viaduct at Rio Como. He discussed building a King Post span with threaded tension rod including nut and a 90-degree horizontal curve, vertical curves and short tangents with grades up to 15 percent. He also discussed material choices, cutting and drilling techniques, use of jigs and installation of NBW's.



This is a very impressive example of scale model building.

For those who may have missed the December clinic, it is now available on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDu5M-9o3mk&feature=youtu.be>

Al also sent us trestle fans a link to a spectacular trestle:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p06XcOml5dw>

The December SV&W Clinic was held via Zoom. We had 18 folks online and some with spouses.

Our third clinic using Zoom is beginning to feel routine (and comfortable). Although vaccines are starting to become available it seems unlikely enough of them will be provided for us to resume normal meetings in the next few months but at least there is light at the end of the tunnel. Keep an eye on the Grab Iron for our clinics as well as other online clinics happening around the region which are open to anyone.

Upcoming 2021 clinics!

Jan 13, 2021 -- Rich Thom -- Building scenery using rubber rocks and more.

Feb 10, 2021

Mar 10, 2021

Apr 14, 2021

May 12, 2021

CHAIRMAN'S CLINIC NEWS

on the Zoom front, I had mentioned in a recent newsletter that I set up a recurring clinic link that would have the same meeting ID and passcode every month. Due to security reasons, this function has been abandoned and deleted. Future meetings will have a new ID and passcode every time to avoid any potential issues from outsiders. The links/ID/passcode will be posted in the [Grab Iron](#) on the Monday. before the meeting, I will also send out an email with the same information.

Hoping everyone had a safe and happy New Year.

You may also notice here that there are no subjects listed after January, *why is that?* Because I need **VOLUNTEERS** to step up and do some clinics. Same as in-person meetings, using Zoom is simple and effective with your typical presentation methods – speaking and pictures. Powerpoints are preferred but a group of pictures that can be talked to are fine also.

Here are a few scenarios to consider for online clinics:

1> Clinician makes powerpoint and shares screen in zoom while presenting (this is the preferred normal method). People can ask questions via “chat” and can be answered after clinic slides or active participation with zoom host allowing “unmute”

2> Clinician makes powerpoint as usual but is not zoom knowledgeable. Send powerpoint to Clinic host. Host shares screen in zoom while clinician talks. Same could be done with layout tour and static pictures.

3> Clinician creates notes and photos to support a clinic but does not have powerpoint skills. Send materials to MS Office savvy person and compile powerpoint. Present as per 1 or 2 above. Live clinic. This can be done using a cell phone, tablet or webcam connected via zoom.

4> Clinician does clinic live by showing work/layout and describing activity live streaming. Requires some knowledge on media/technology use. Maybe some other items such as tripods or stands. Live clinic could also be chalk talks with camera focused on person talking and dry erase board/flip chart/chalk board, etc. More difficult but certainly entertaining and doable in zoom.

I will be the “host” for all clinics. Clinicians will be designated “Co-Hosts” through Zoom in order for them to share screen and take control of meeting. You don’t have to know what you are doing other than starting the zoom meeting on your computer/device to participate or be a clinician, I will walk you through it ahead of time. It is really easy.

Please contact us if you have questions or have ideas. We need to populate the calendar ASAP.

Rich Blake – slugsmaasher@oakharbor.net

Susan Gonzales - fishnutztoo@frontier.com

Cliff Aaker – cliff@aaker.net

Our Whidbey & Skagit clinic is part of an online discussion group at

PNWRRModelers@groups.io

If you aren't already subscribed do so by sending an email to the above link.

4TH DIVISION ZOOM LAYOUT TOURS

You can expect a regular layout tour every Saturday at 10:00 AM. The Zoom link will be posted on the [Grab Iron](#).

4dpnr.com

One of the best clinic options is the Zoom meetings put on by the NMRA [4th division](#).

The 4th division also provide a youtube archive of past Layout tours and clinic videos you can access at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-pc9_xA-w2t3RdhLZ7BNOA

You can also visit the NMRA youtube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHw-7-1FWB5zQgTM0ZVY-Yw>

Archives of the NMRA newsletter maintained by editor Greg Kujawa are also available. View the August issue pnr.nmra.org/switchlist

Down the line:

No progress has been made on finding a new venue for our clinics. Until the quarantine appears to be coming to an end we will pursue the Zoom option.

Layout Progress:

Dick Haines kindly provided us a couple of short videos of his layout. He took them one night with a hand-held Canon sure shot so forgive the wiggles. The first is of the sunset lighting effect

http://ww2.whidbey.net/clifa/clinic/MVI_1565.MOV

The second illustrates his staging yard beneath the main (Aberdeen, Washington) yard. and then yard details.

http://ww2.whidbey.net/clifa/clinic/MVI_1569.MOV

We also have a contribution from Rich Thom on his layout progress.
THE LAST BRIDGE IS COMPLETED!

Rich Thom, like everyone else, has found the pandemic concerning, confusing and more than anything else, confining. One upside is that he has (finally!) completed all the bridges on his HO-scale Coldwater Creek & Cascade RR. Hopefully wisely, he left the most challenging one until last, on the theory that he might have learned something from the earlier ones built. No comment on how that theory worked out. This last bridge, the scratch-built Coldwater Creek High Bridge, is in the foreground of the first photo,

Fig 1:



Fig 1 – Coldwater Creek High Bridge, foreground, with Silver Falls Bridge above and behind

For those who have operated on Rich's layout, this scene greets crews as they enter the train room, so it's one of those foreground scenes that one tries to get just right. The CC High Bridge is very modest, only 85' long and 53' high, and mostly a simple wooden pile trestle. It has one quirk: there's a sheer granite wall on the north end of the gap (at center-left in the photo). The pile driver crew came out to inspect, and after a few epithets uttered about the competence of the railroad's surveyor, pronounced that no piles could be driven into it. Ever resourceful, the bridge engineer brought in some scrap girders from elsewhere and used them to build a short deck girder at the span's north end. A concrete abutment at the north end; a double-bent to transition deck girder to trestle; and a timber bulkhead at the south end all add interest to an otherwise unremarkable span.

Rich built the bridge "backwards", from the rails down, a sequence he described earlier this year. Fig 2 shows the tie-stringer assembly clamped to the rails; the bents will be installed beneath it. A better view of the granite cliff necessitating the short girder span is visible in this photo.



Fig 2 – Coldwater Creek High Bridge Under Construction; Tie-Stringer Assembly in Place

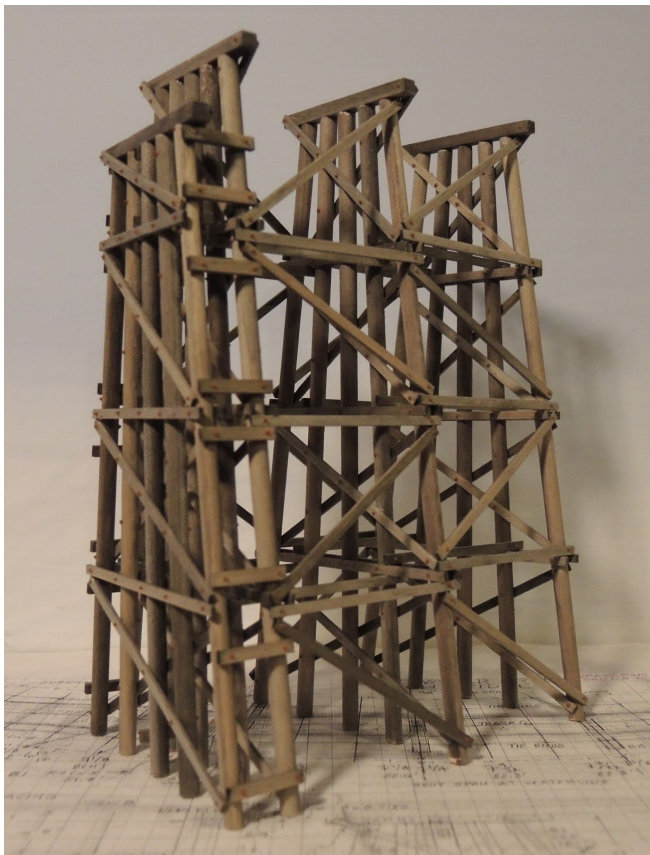


Fig 3 – Central Section Built at the Bench

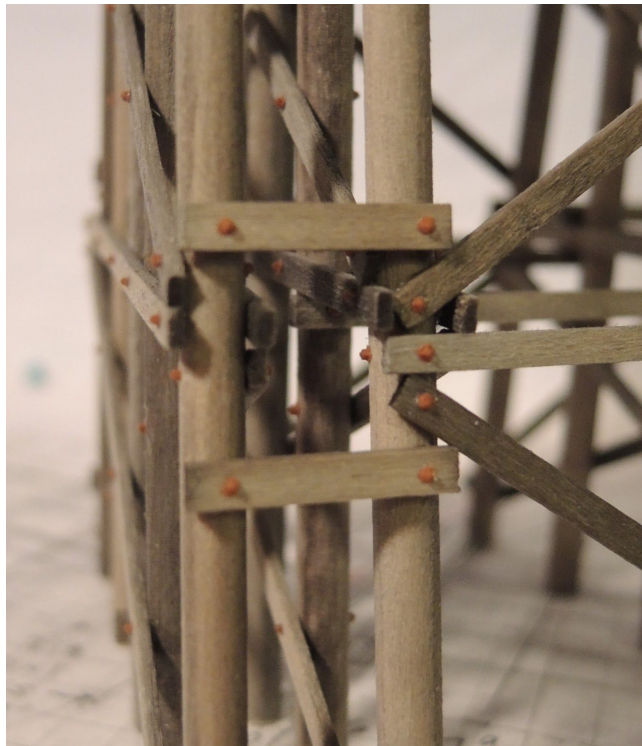


Fig 4 – NBW Detail on the Double-Bent

Trestle construction used traditional methods: all lumber was pre-stained with Micromark Bridge and Tie Stain; bents were glued up on a styrene jig, using Aleene's Tacky Glue; the central section (Fig 3) was built at the bench to keep everything plumb; and NBWs (Tichy #8142) were painted with Poly-Scale Rust and glued in, also with Aleene's (Fig 4). Girders were plastic castings from the scrap box. The concrete abutment was fashioned from mat board and basswood, and the timber bulkhead built up board-by-board.

Rich decided to put in all the NBWs that this bridge would have had, even those one has to stoop down to see and only then visible with a flashlight. (NMRA AP evaluators have been known to do this!) On this short, relatively low span, the total was 651 NBWs. Yes, Rich counted them. 2020 was that kind of year.

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