



The Mount Vernon NMRA Clinic



Nick Muff's Layout and a Rail Trip that was Tripped Up



June 17 & 20, 2024 Highlights



This is a special edition of the NMRA Mount Vernon Clinic's Newsletter. For June the clinic forwent it's normal operations and planned two visits to two layouts. On Monday evening June 17th, attendees of the clinic gathered in Sedro-Woolley at the home of Nick Muff, model railroader extraordinaire, to see the latest on his Kansas City Southern layout. Then on Thursday morning June 20th, many of those same attendees met at railroad depots in Bellingham, Mount Vernon and Stanwood for an anticipated excursion to Tacoma to visit the Puget Sound Model Railroad Engineers, which, according to Al Carter, "is a very large and complete HO layout housed in the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma." One of the visits was a rousing success. The other was just lousy. We will let you guess which was which.

Top Photo: Nick Muff's famous F7 is always a treat to those visiting his spectacular layout. Left photo: Levi and his mother Rocio head down the rails to Tacoma.

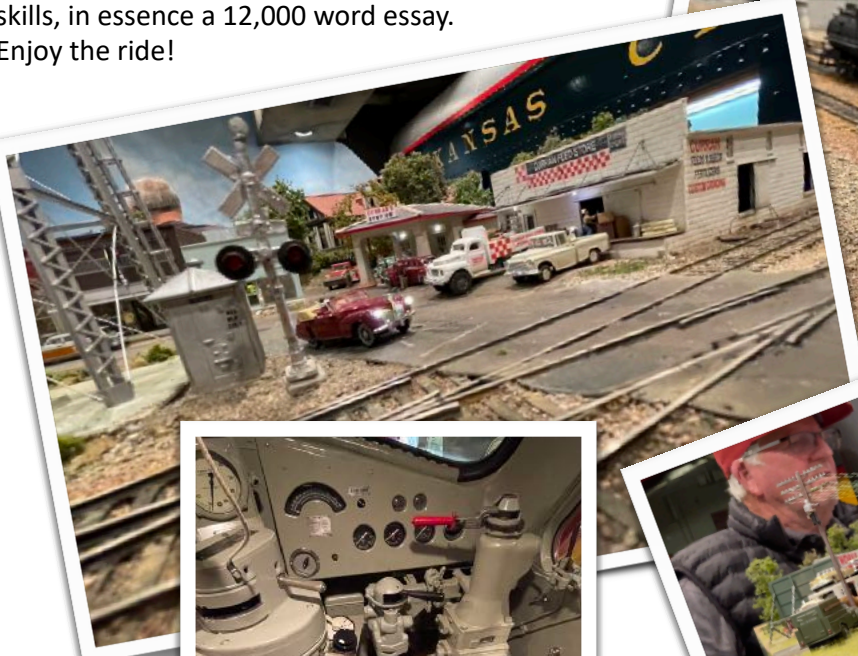
Main Event Nick Muff's KCS Layout

The evening of June 17th began as usual for the NMRA Mount Vernon Clinic attendees with a visit to Round Table Pizza in Mount Vernon for dinner and a round of witty, or perhaps witless, dialogue. However, rather than heading over to the Senior Center as we are wont to do on most 3rd Mondays of the month's, those self-same model railroad enthusiasts found themselves heading east to the hamlet of Sedro-Woolley for a visit to Nick Muff's Kansas City Southern themed HO scale layout.

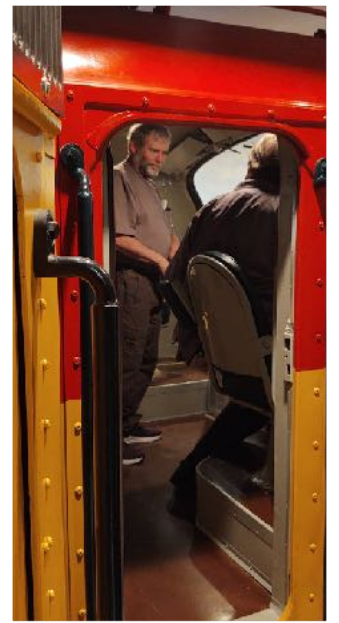
Over 20 individuals wound their way down the stairs and into the KCS replica passenger car on the way to the layout which, as everyone knows by now, not only has one of the most incredibly detailed model railroad layouts in the state, but unlike almost all others, is highlighted by the existence of an authentic F7 locomotive shell and cab interior as well as the aforementioned replica coach.

There were many first time visitors to the layout and, like most of us, were astounded at Nick's workmanship. Incidentally, Nick will be conducting the July Clinic on 3D modeling on the 15th.

As they always say a picture is worth a thousand words so over the next several pages I have written, with the help of David Sherwood's photographic skills, in essence a 12,000 word essay. Enjoy the ride!



Nick Muff's KCS (continued)



The Ill-fated Tacoma Train Trip



After weeks of planning, the morning of June 20th arrived for a trip to Tacoma to visit the PSMRE HO layout. At several stations in Northwest Washington including Bellingham, Mount Vernon and Stanwood or more members gathered for the anticipated visit to the Washington State History Museum which houses the layout, but more importantly for the train ride down south.

It soon became apparent that the train was running late as the arrival time in Bellingham came and went. Then word came in from Amtrak that the run was actually officially delayed. After several hours as updated arrival times came and went. Amtrak finally announced that the train was going to be running very late and that passengers would be able to cancel their tickets and receive a refund.

At this point most of the entourage opted to cancel their plans, take the refund

and head for home. However some hardy optimists decided that the train ride was too exciting to give up and decided to wait it out.

Mark Malmkar, Levi and his mother Rocio Reyes caught the train in Mount Vernon running 2 and a half hours late and were joined by Dale Bearden and Karl Kleeman in Stanwood. Mark says of the trip, "Levi was a typical 6th grader. He was so excited he could hardly sit still. It wasn't a bad trip. We arrived in Tacoma about 2 1/2 hours late, of course. Dale and Carl heard from a trainman that they could upgrade their trip and continue to Portland and catch the northbound 518 back. They stayed on the 517 train. Levi, his mom and I, got off."

But what had caused the delay? Bob Stafford was able to ascertain the reason later that same day. According to Bob, "There is a slow order on the mainline switch at Custer where last week's derailment happened when a train ran through a switch. As Train 517 was going through the slow order a person tried to jump onto the side of the Amtrak train to ride it by hanging onto it. This person fell under the train and was killed."

Meanwhile back at the Tacoma station, Mark said, "Inside the depot we found out the northbound 518 was delayed, also. (the trainman told Dale and Karl the "same" train would turn around and become the 518. It didn't happen.) Dale and Karl got trapped in Portland because the 517 and 518 passed each other, just as we feared.." Mark continued saying, "Finally, at 7:00 pm the three of us got on the 518 north. We got to Mount Vernon at 10:00 pm. The way things worked, we probably could have visited the museum as we had about 4 hours in Tacoma." I reached out to Dale and Karl to get their take on the adventure, but have yet to hear back. Levi's mother Rocio did say, "Well, it was a little stressful but for Levi it was such a great dream to travel by train that despite what happened we went. For my son it was very fun and he had a very happy time. Since his birthday is approaching I wanted him to fulfill his dream of traveling by train."

The consensus from several people involved is that they would like to try and reschedule, but nothing official has been decided. *Above: The 517 finally arrives in Mount Vernon. To the right: Dale Beardon and Karl Kleeman were last seen heading to Portland on the 517.*



Schedule Change Reminder: The Mount Vernon clinic will be shifting to a schedule of March through November, effective now. The clinic will still be held on the 3rd Monday of those months, at 7:00 pm at the Mount Vernon Senior Center. Driving to and from the clinic is easier during spring/summer/fall months and we won't have to venture out in the darkest days of winter to go to the clinic.

Coming Down the Track

July 15, 2024 Mt Vernon

Nick Muff 3D Printing

August 19 Mt Vernon

Clinic TBD

September 14 Alger

WSMRC Open House

September 16 Mt Vernon

Clinic TBD

October 5-6 Lynden

Train Show

The Mount Vernon clinics for April and May are now public on the 4dPNR YouTube channel. Here are the links:

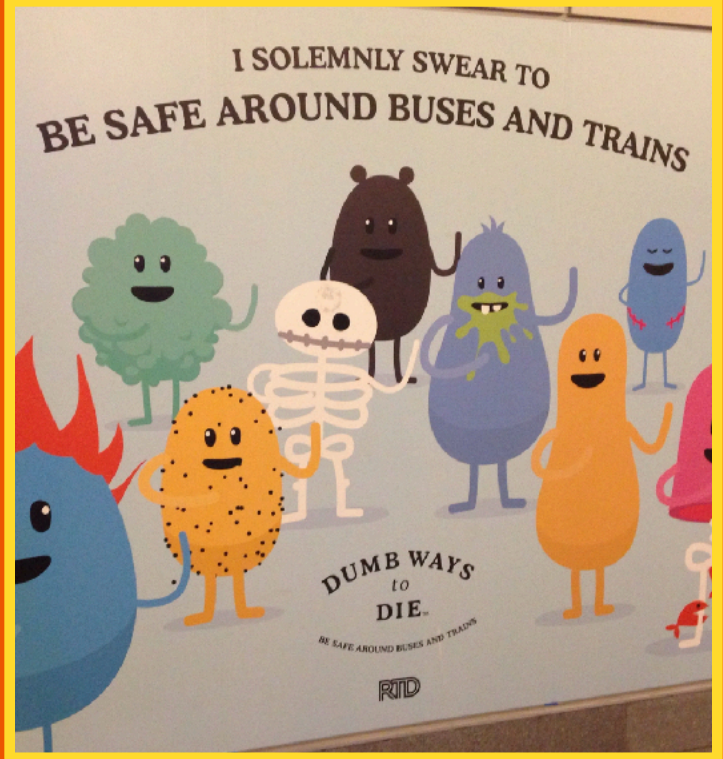
April: Don Jones Lighting Passenger Cars

May: Bob Stafford Burlington Northern Coal Trains

Tool Time Classified Section & Humor(e) or less



This month's Tool Time consist of one item. For Sale: paint spray booth on roll around A/V stand. Includes replacement fan (computer fan), light, power strip and some extra filter material. \$25. Al Carter, 360-399-1226.



In response to the unfortunate incident that led to the cancellation of the trip to Tacoma. Here is a [Public Service Announcement](#) that was produced by Metro Trains in Melbourne in 2012 to promote rail safety. The video shows human "beans" dying in dumb ways which includes not being safe around railroad tracks.

SPONSORSHIP:

The Mount Vernon NMRA clinic is one of several clinics sponsored by the Fourth Division, Pacific Northwest Region, National Model Railroad Association. We meet on the 3rd Monday at 7:00 pm at the Mount Vernon Senior Center, 1401 Cleveland Street. No meetings during the summer months (June, July, August). Membership in the NMRA is **NOT** required to attend our clinic. For more info on joining the NMRA, see: www.nmra.org/membership. Or see **Al Carter** for a membership application. Remember, if you are unsure, there is a one-time 9-month Rail Pass trial membership for only \$19.95.

CONTACT US

Clinic Chair: **Al Carter** (tabooma@msn.com or 425-577-1570)
Clinic Refreshments: **Dave Falconer** (dsfalconer@aol.com)
Newsletter Editor: **Steve McCartt** (smccartt@comcast.net)
Newsletter Publisher: **Steve McCartt** (smccartt@comcast.net)
Clinic and Newsletter Photographer: **Steve McCartt**
Roster Keeper and Videographer: **Bob Stafford**

4TH DIVISION ZOOM LAYOUT TOURS

Courtesy of Cliff Aaker

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

One of the best clinic options is the meetings put on by the [NMRA 4th Division](#). Some of these are also Zoom Meetings.

The 4th division also provide a youtube archive of past Layout tours and clinic videos you can access at www.youtube.com/c/4dpnrMovies

You can also visit the NMRA youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChw-7-1FWB5zOgTM0ZVY-Yw>

Note: Membership in the NMRA is not required to view Zoom meetings or on line clinics.