

## Fairfax Station Railroad Museum 7 & 8 December 2013

The 24<sup>th</sup> annual train show at historic Fairfax Station started with a wet and soggy setup on Friday, but by Saturday there were clear blue skies despite the cooler temperatures. And all was well .... until Sunday that is, when the day started with snow, changing to sleet and then with freezing rain expected during the late afternoon. The show was closed at 2:30 pm to allow folks to get home safely before nightfall. Despite the poor weather, 485 visitor did venture out (mainly that Saturday) to see the model train show.



In addition to our O-gauge set up, the show featured displays for 9 different gauges from T to full scale: T, N, HO, S, lego, O, standard, G, and a full scale Southern Railway caboose. Running layouts could be found both inside and on the grounds of the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum plus two running layouts inside the caboose. In addition, there was a small table top layout featuring live-steam model engines.

Members of the National Capital Trackers participate in a number of different ways during the show. We operated a 8-module layout featuring a variety of trains that smoked, chugged, and made all kinds of sounds – a real hit with the audience both child and adult alike – including Thomas and his friends James and Diesel. Two modules from Joe and Mona H. were decorated with winter village scenes. Frank H. provided two modules featuring the Reese’s Pieces factory which was in full production mode just down the street from an active service station and hardware store, the latter seeming to be on fire, and a 4’ long bridge at the foot of the layout. Rich C. had three modules – one served as a staging area at the rear of the layout and the other showed a vista of Yosemite National Park and a tribute to the Twin Towers of New York City. While the total area for the layout is rather limited, because of the small size of the museum, it is made very functional by the four custom, small radius corners provided by Thom McK. Speaking of Thom, he and Tim set up an American Flyer S gauge layout that Thom and Frank had resurrected last year.



Dan D. and his wife Hope had a wonderful standard gauge set-up running around a decorated tree. Their layout also featured a number of tinsplate buildings including an industrial power station and numerous model cars. Matthew K. shared runtime with Hope while Dan tended to other duties as Train Doctor. Clem also served as train doctor during the show.

During the show the spectators saw a passenger train from the Pennsylvania Railroad, a Western Maryland log train pulled by a Shay engine, C&O and other freight trains. On the whimsical side, there were several appearances of the Polar Express and handcars powered by polar bears and Christmas characters. Jim W. brought vintage tinsplate trains to run.

While the weather caused the attendance to be about half the usual number, those that attended had a good time nevertheless. Next year's show will be on 6-7 December 2014. Special thanks to Jeff M., the new Holiday Train Show Chairman, at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, for making the difficult but wise decision to close the show early on Sunday and for allowing us to leave the layout and trains in the building until Monday afternoon once the weather cleared.

Rich Colton  
Thom McKinney  
Trackmasters