

## Winter Wonderland Show Report

### Manassas Candy Factory 2018

Once again, the Manassas Center for the Arts (***The Candy Factory***) hosted the Winter Wonderland Train show featuring the National Capital Trackers. As usual we provided a 28X46 foot O gauge layout and a 11X24 foot Standard Gauge layout. This year was unique because the two layouts were integrated with two O gauge bridges over the STG track. If the timing was right two STG trains passed under three O Gauge trains on the bridges, a first for the NCT.



***Standard Gauge:*** The Manassas City/Museum folks decorated the STG layout once the STG crew had all the track in place. The city provided fitted table covers, that reached the floor, for the tables used in the layout, all 19 of them. The STG offered two parallel loops and two trolley reversing tracks for everyone's enjoyment. Norm Beaver provided yeoman support along with Clem, Craig, George and Dave. New trains, vintage trains, and homemade trains were in action continuously. Clem provided a

consist that was used for a graffiti train which was very special with each tracker and some spectators providing the graffiti.



**O Gauge:** The layout this year, even though the footprint was essentially the same as past years, the design was unique. U shaped with one leg of the U over the STG layout. The modules and corners in the STG area were raised several inches using the tried and true PVC pipe/clamp method, this was necessary for clearance of the special toaster train, 10.5 inches. The new Geezer Gate was an integral part of the layout and was constantly used and performed flawlessly. A great asset for the club. A lot of knees and backs were thankful.

WIFI and remotes all worked as advertised the majority of the time. Every now and then glitches occurred. Just remotes or just WIFI or mixed operations use was inconclusive. Every description of train was in action including the Weed Sprayer Car. Of course, every train seemed to sport the new trackers Christmas car either in red or green or both. The Winter Wonderland scenery was again evident on every module, a great touch for the season. At times 6-7 trains were to be seen on every part of the layout.

**Special Visitors:** This indeed was a special year. A member of the Richmond VA based **River City 3 Railers** enjoyed the afternoon with us discussing and running trains. Thursday morning, we hosted the **(Alternative Paths School)** a special needs group of teenagers and their teachers and parents for a good hour or so. Special thanks to the trackers who volunteered for the event. Bill Creech, Craig Schelle, George Tsakiris and Dave Eadie. The families of the teenagers were most impressed and appreciated our gracious hospitality. The visit was arranged through the Manassas Museum where several parents are volunteers. We had a special visitor from the past an original tracker, **Bill Bushmeyer**, spent some time with us and



was very impressed with our efforts this year.



One grandfather brought one set of grandchildren one day and another group the next day. Sunday morning a church bus with 40 or so kids showed up and enjoyed our trains. This year a bit longer than 2 minutes.

\*\*\*\* I think the most impressive visitors were the grandparents and grandson from Lynchburg VA who made the trip on the NE Regional Amtrak train to Manassas just so the boy could see our layout. True to form Bear related the story and of course Bear had the grandson inside the layout running trains. Just amazing! This year the City provided volunteer hosts for each day of the show. Most are volunteers for the museum including the girl scouts. Food and monetary donations were taken for city charities.

The total visitor count per the building security guards was **2476** people. A record number for the Candy Factory and NCT for this venue.

**Food:** The quantity and quality of the food each day did not disappoint. Meatballs, a crockpot full, meatball sandwiches and pasta salad, Freshly baked ham 12 lbs, and rolls with chips, Pasta and Meat sauce, two crockpots, Cheesy Grits and meatballs, two crockpots, and a large sheet cake in memory of **Harold Pavelka**. Cookies and



brownies and three apple pies topped off everything. Sunday morning was very special Light and fluffy waffles with maple syrup and copious amounts of Popeyes fried chicken all washed down with Orange Juice plus. Needless to say, we did not go hungry! Many thanks to everyone who made the effort to keep us up and running.

The crowds always seemed to come in waves, very steady waves. Wednesday through Friday attendance increased over past years and the heavy rain on Saturday did have an impact. All in all, attendance was up for the show. As usual Bill and Bear coordinated the trailer and provided much needed support in every aspect of the show. Many thanks to everyone who participated. Jack F, Martha and Jackson, Jim M. Joe L, Bob E, Bear B, Bill C, Matthew K, Steve K, John Z and Rick E on the O gauge side. Clem C, Craig S, George T, Dave E and Norm B on the STG side. The Manassas City/ Museum, and the Candy Factory staff rounded out the tremendous support for the show. We can't forget the Trackers who visited and also contributed to the show. Ben S, Russell E, Cadence H, Dennis and Thomas G, John & Jake E, Lindsay W, Dan and Hope D, and Phil B. A very special time for everyone.

Regis Harkins,

Trackmaster.