



THE FIREBOX

July/August 2026

August Club Meeting

Place: Carillon Brewing Company

Third Wednesday, Aug 19th

A reminder: We have arranged with the Carillon Brewing Co. to hold our monthly meetings in a side room at the brewery. We have the room from 6 to 9 PM with meeting start still at 7PM. Come early and have dinner or snacks beforehand. You can bring your food into the meeting if you're not done by meeting start.

IMPORTANT LESSON

Operating rule #1: If you throw a switch, return it to the original position. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Operating rule #2: See rule #1

(See "Rail Fest Incidents" article for details)

RAIL FEST RECAP

The 2026 Rail Fest is in the books and it was a great success, except for a couple of unfortunate incidents. (more later).

A SUCCESSFUL WEEKEND

Great weather and minimal competing shows (no Dayton Air Show) contributed to near record attendance. The Park reports nearly 5000 admissions for the 2 days. Many vendors said they had enjoyed a successful show and would be back next year. This year's dinner on Saturday evening was well attended and enjoyed by all. A big thank you and

appreciation goes to the ladies who made all the delicious deserts.

We had great crews both days and were able to run 2 trains using all the riding equipment available. 10 cars behind 7695



and 5 cars behind 9615.



Total ridership figures weren't kept but based on rider \$ donations, the estimated number of passengers is between 1500 and 2000.

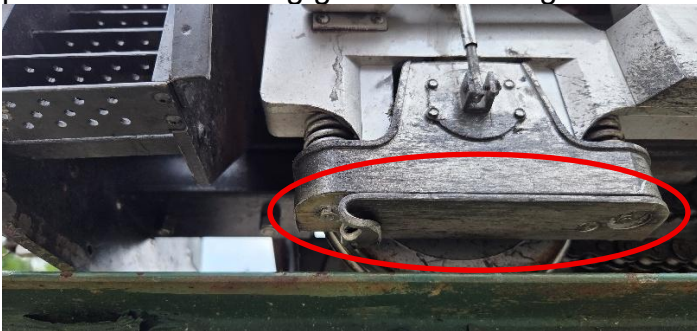
RAIL FEST INCIDENTS

While over all a good weekend, we did suffer some negative events. At the end of Sunday's run we suffered a bad derailment and crash involving engine 7695. The stub switch on the

main line going into the steaming bays was thrown to allow engine 9615 to be put away, but the switch was not reset for the main line. At the same time, 7695 was making a last passenger run for some people who arrived right at 4 PM. Coming up the main line by the storage tent, the engineer saw that the switch ahead was open and tried to stop. Because of the heavy train, momentum carried 7695 into the open switch and derailed. Passengers were OK, but the resulting crash bent the snowplow beyond repair and wrecked the front platform and stairs.



It took almost an hour to remove the damaged parts and free the engine so it could be rolled into the engine house. The engine was withdrawn for service pending an inspection. Follow up showed the skid plates added during engine rebuild this spring took the hit and protected the running gear from damage.



The engine was put back in service in time for the July 26 run. It runs well, but looks funny without the front platform and steps.



The front platform and steps are a bolt on structure. We have ordered a replacement from Titan trains for around \$700. **An expensive way to learn what can happen when a switch is moved and not returned to it's original setting.**

Also on Sunday, Bob Schwenke's 0-6-0 steam tank switcher suffered a catastrophic failure of the engines water pump ending its running for the day. The engine will likely be sidelined for the rest of this year while the damage is assessed and repairs made.

JULY 4TH RUN

The July 4th run day caught a lot of us by surprise, having planned family gatherings and other activities. Thanks to a dedicated group of members that were able to come down to the Park and make the run happen. There were not a lot of people in the Park. We had about 100 riders. With engine 7695 sidelined, engine 9615 took care of business. The crew said they enjoyed having time to talk with the riders. It was an unhurried time and enjoyed by everyone.

JULY 26TH RUN

July 26th was our first regular Sunday run day not associated with a special event. We got a lot of positive feedback and thank you's, especially from people who said they couldn't come on Saturdays. We ran 2 trains of 5 cars each and they were full all afternoon. All together over 300 riders. It was nice to be able to run Pennsylvania engine 9615 with its matching train set.



The Park asks us to remove track again – where's the water ?

A feature of the print shop addition is new restrooms. Restrooms need water and there is no water source in that part of the Park. After researching available alternatives the decision was to tap into a water main that runs under all 3 main tracks, the yard tracks & switches between our picnic shelter and the equipment storage tent. The Park notified us in early July of their plans and advised removing or protecting the track. Initially we thought they were going to trench through the area, but after many discussions learned they needed to bring very heavy machinery across our tracks to get to the place they needed to work. We discussed several alternatives, but decided the best was to remove the track. The T-rail could be unbolted and set aside. Only the bar stock rail would have to be cut to be removed and we are experienced at that and putting it back. Saturday July 11th we assembled a work crew to remove the track. We pulled riding cars and work equipment out of the tent and moved it to the big tunnel so it would be available for the next run day. Started at 9:30



and finished at 1 PM.



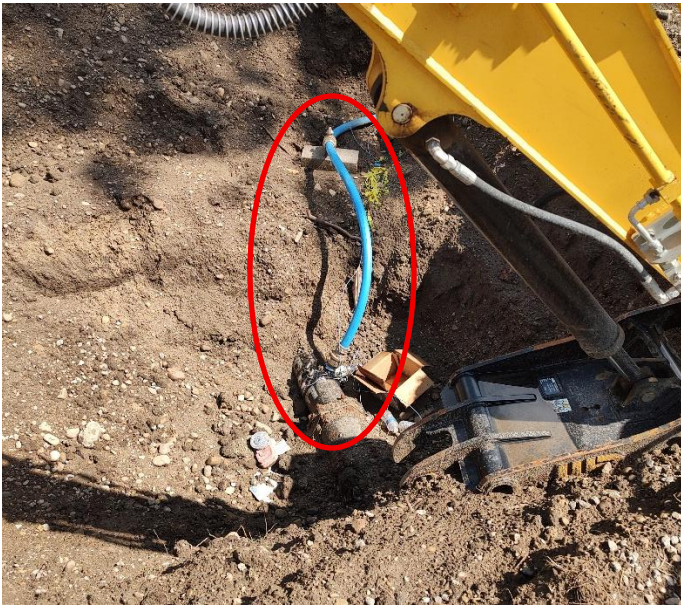
The weather wasn't cooperating, as it rained hard about 2/3 of the way through. Here we are waiting it out about noon.



While the contractor had no intention of digging where our track was, they did need to cross the area with a very large heavy machine.



It took them several days to find the water main, but only one day to hook up the water line that was needed.



The hole was filled in the next day and the Parked notified us that we could start putting the track back. A special workday was called on the 24th. First priority was to reconnect the track and switches to the ballast track and work train track in the tent. At the same time we bolted the T-rail back in place on main track 1 and ballasted it. Work on restoring main track 2 was also started. On the 25th main track 2 was reconnected and main track 3 sections moved into position but not connected. Additional ballasting and leveling was done on main tracks 1&2 and we were ready for the July 26th run.



Additional work was done on Aug 4th workday. Finished ballasting and leveling track #1 and

started ballast and leveling of track #2. Bolted the missing section of main track #3 in place. The stub switch leading to yard tracks 4 & 5 was set in place and received new ties but was not bolted in place.

T-shirts/Hoodies Available

The last order has arrived and items are ready to be paid for and picked up. See Mike Desch if you have something on order.

Item for sale

2-4-0+0-4-2 Garret type

Long time club member and locomotive builder John Baker is selling his 2-4-0+0-4-2 Garret type steam locomotive. It has run at our track in years past, but John has reached the point in life that he can no longer run it. Some details about the engine:

Length: 7ft + (under 8ft)

Gauge: 71/2"

Fuel: propane fired

Assembled weight: 650 Lbs.

Southern valve gear. One lever controlling fwd & rev. to both sets of cylinders.

Single axle propane trailer car

Accessories include: winch & frame to lift units,

- storage dolly 10ft long, 30" high
- Prints and sketches of components & assembly
- Also for sale a 2009 Town & Country Van w/ carry board to transport locomotive. (if wanted) 179000miles, new tires, runs OK.

Price is negotiable. For more information contact John at 513-543-1946

