

First Logo (1973)







MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION



**A Pictorial History
of the
Tri-City Model Railroaders**

Genesis



Genesis

- 1964 Gene Miller and Gerry Ohler met and began modeling together.
- 1966 John DeSteeze met Bill McDill. Bill was building an HO-scale dual gauge railroad.
- 1968 John and Bill organized the first 5th Division mini-meet in the Tri-Cities, February 17. This was the pivotal event in the history of the Tri-City Model Railroaders.



Genesis

- 1968 The “Hunting Lost Spring” group was “organized” and met round robin at members’ homes. Members included: John DeSteeze, Taylor Graham, Bill McDill, Gene Miller, Bob Moore, Gerry Ohler, and Allan Schneider . George Goulet and Jim Taylor joined soon after.
- 1970 In a one month rush, the group built the first “club” layout in Gene’s unfinished family room. This 6 x 10 foot layout was displayed at the newly opened Columbia Center Mall in February. Bob Moore published an article on this effort in the 1971 NMRA Bulletin.



Genesis

George Goulet, Gene Miller and Bob (Doc) Moore working on the first “club” display layout, 1970



Gene Miller

George Goulet

Doc Moore



Genesis

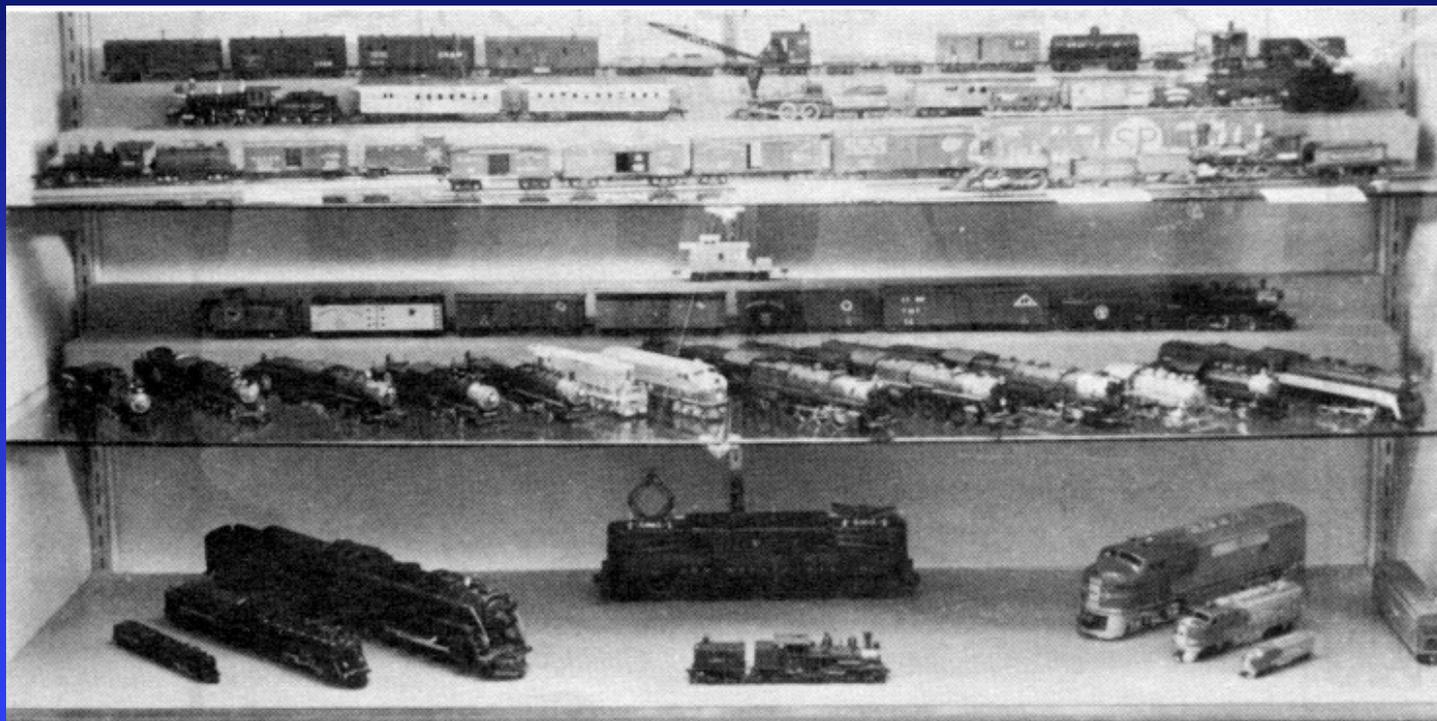
First display layout constructed by the Hunting
Lost Spring Group





Genesis

Models were also displayed at Columbia Center,
Kennewick, February 1970





First Club Layout

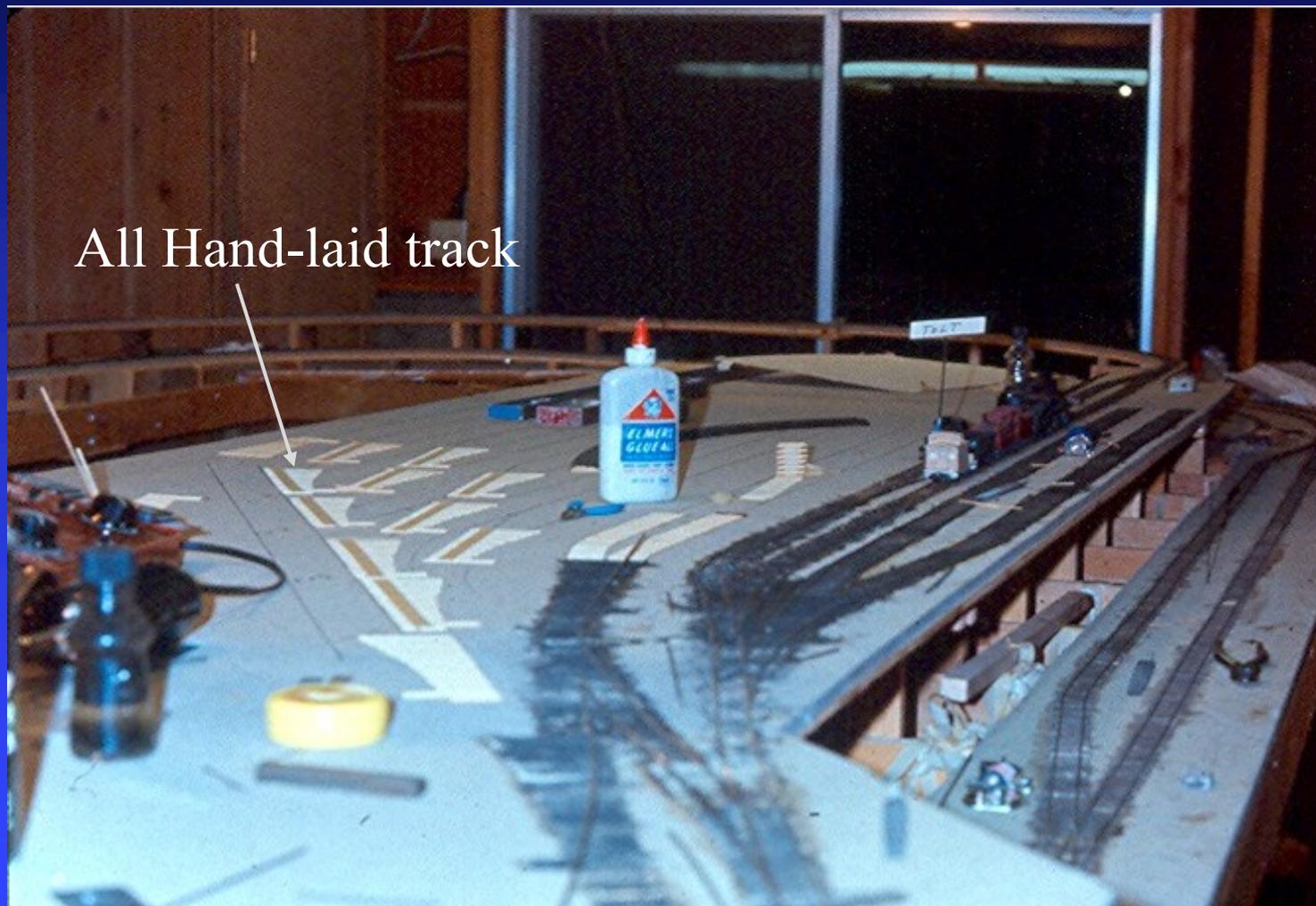
Building the benchwork in Gerry Ohler's basement,
August 1970





First Club Layout

The beginning of the coach and classification yards

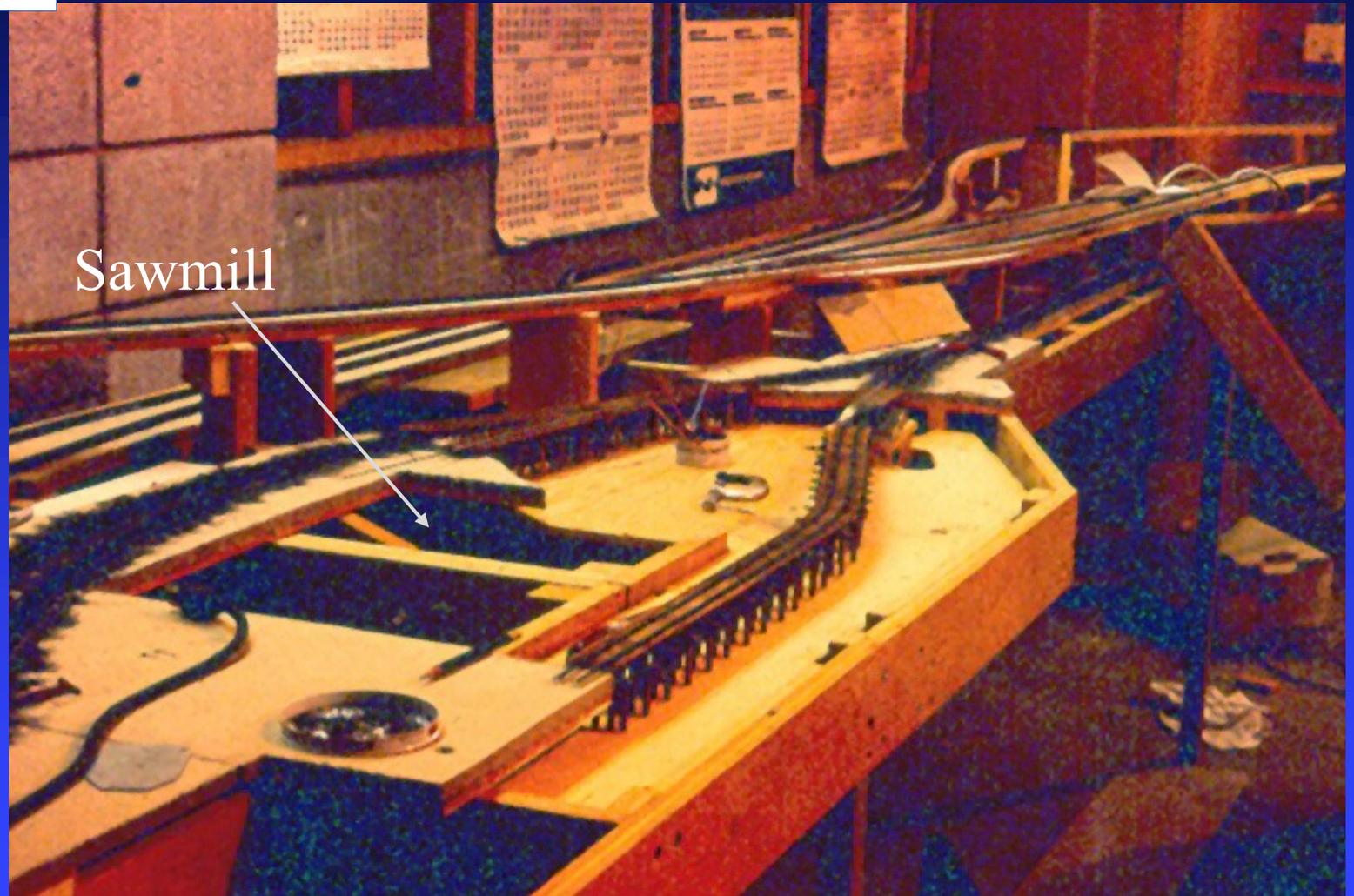


All Hand-laid track



First Club Layout

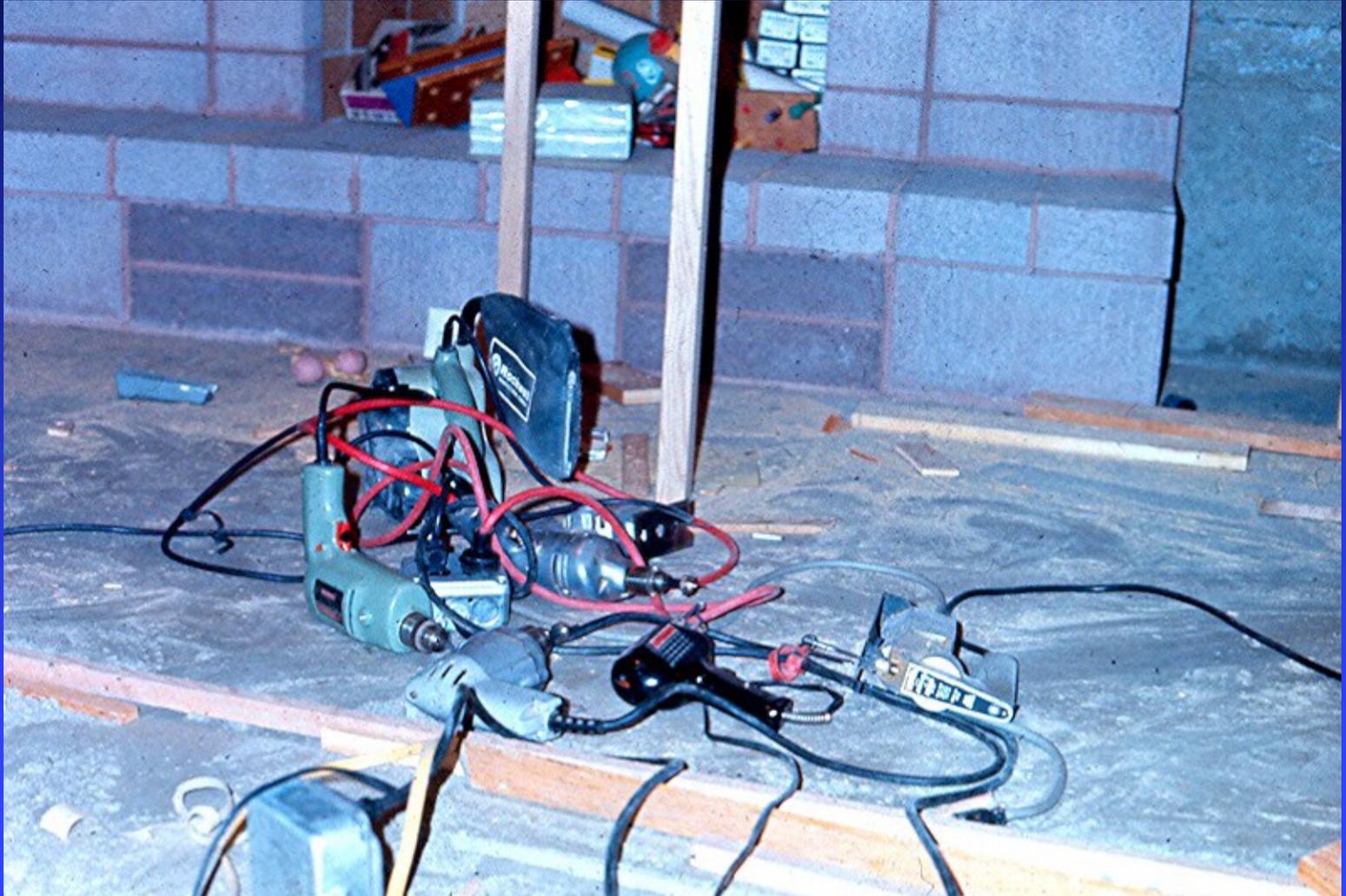
The beginning of a sawmill





First Club Layout

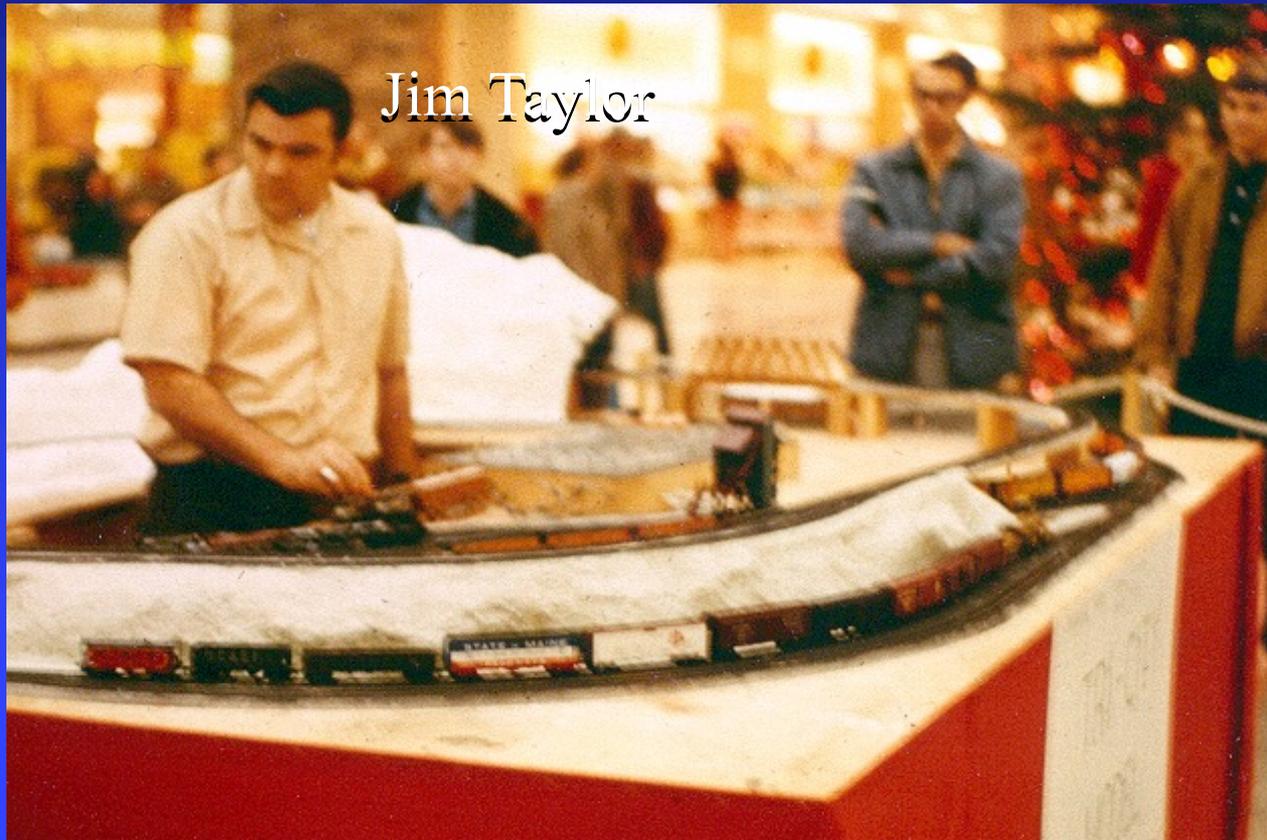
Getting tangled up in our work





Genesis

1971 Ross and Barry Steele donated a small layout which was displayed at Columbia Center during the holiday season





LAYOUTS at Smitty's Pancake House



The Smitty Years

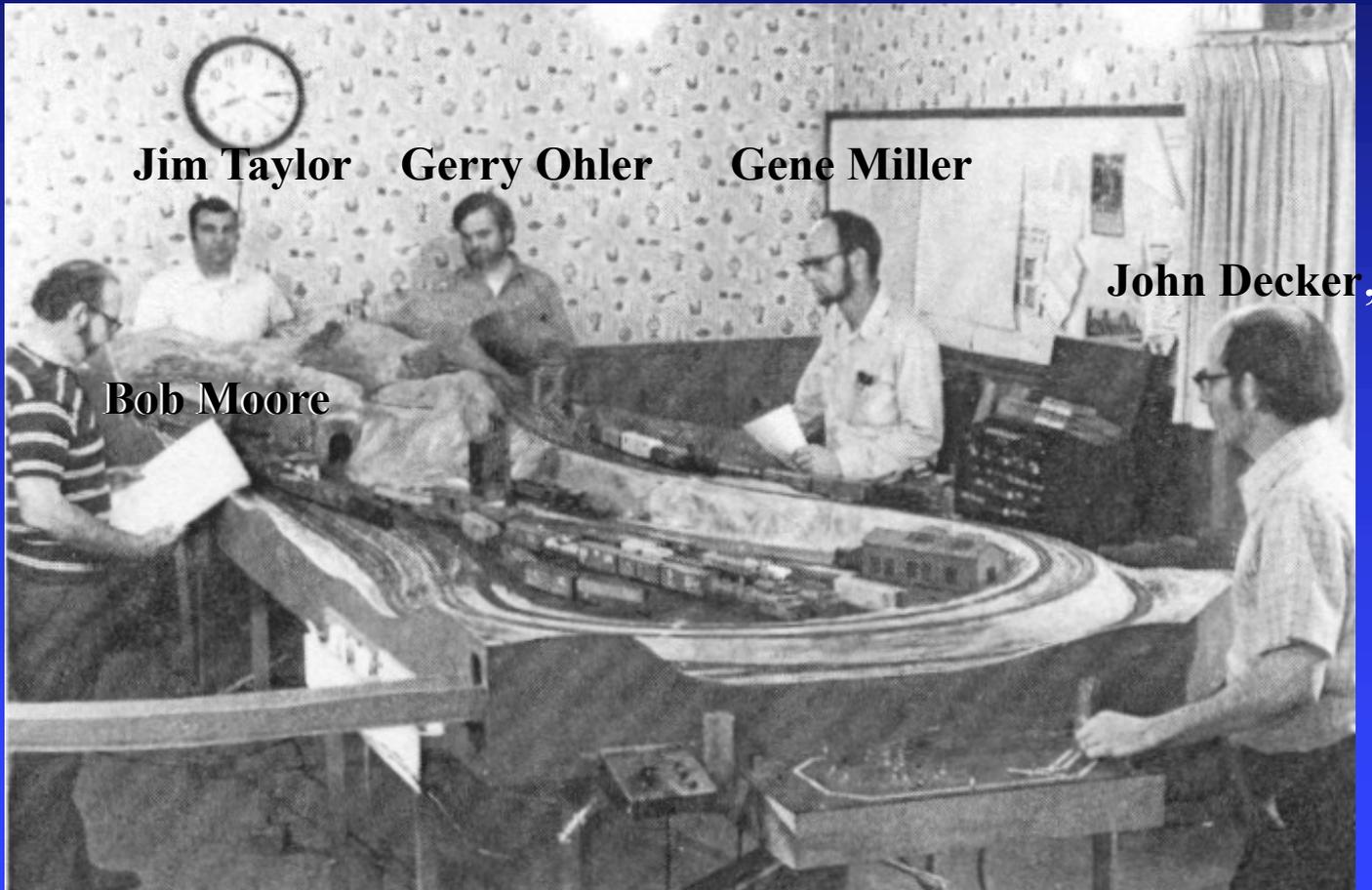
1971 Group moved the Tri-City Railroad from Ohler's basement to the vacant room above Smitty's Pancake House in Pasco.

In addition, a new 5 x 16-foot portable layout was constructed. This layout was operated from handwritten orders by Bob Moore. Bob published an article, "80 minutes of operation in 80 square feet" in the Jan 1980 *Railroad Model Craftsman* describing these operations.



Portable Layout at Smitty's

John Decker, Gene Miller, Gerry Ohler and Jim Taylor operate at Smitty's Pancake House in Pasco as Bob Moore dispatches (1973)





The Smitty Years

1972 In early '72, the club developed a constitution and formally registered members.

Charter members:

Gene Miller, George Goulet, Vern Blumer, Gerry Ohler,
Larry Ward, Barry Steele, Ross Steele, John DeSteele.
Bill McDill, Dick Thompson, John Decker, and Jim
Taylor.



The Smitty Years

1972 In early '72, the club developed a constitution and formally registered members.

Officers:

George Goulet, president

Gene Miller, vice president

Bob Moore, secretary

Larry Ward, treasurer

John Decker, 3-year director

Ross Steele, 2-year director

Gerry Ohler, 1-year director



The Smitty Years

1973 First annual Open House held March 31 at the Pancake House was attended by 284 guests.

Four layouts were in operation; 20 x 40 foot club layout, 5 x 16 foot portable layout, two scened N-scale layouts.

Highlight was a 73-car freight train with 3 steam locos on the head and 2 more cut in the middle.

1975 The first card order operating system was introduced on April 4 on the combined portable and large layouts.



Main Layout at Smitty's

PNR Mini-Meet attendees examine the main layout





The Transition

- 1976 Lost lease at Smitty's
- 1977 By January of '77 the portable layout was sold, the main layout was dismantled, and we were back to round-robin meetings.
- 1977 Two 2 ½ x 8 foot modules were built to the Wenatchee Southern Model Railroaders specifications, but the effort was short lived.
- 1977 Began negotiations with Richland Parks Department on Friday, January 13th for the building net to Bateman Island. Renovation began in June.

The

Hanford, Columbia & Northern

1977 – 2004



HC&N

Exterior view of the club house showing the semaphore and the “refer” heat shield

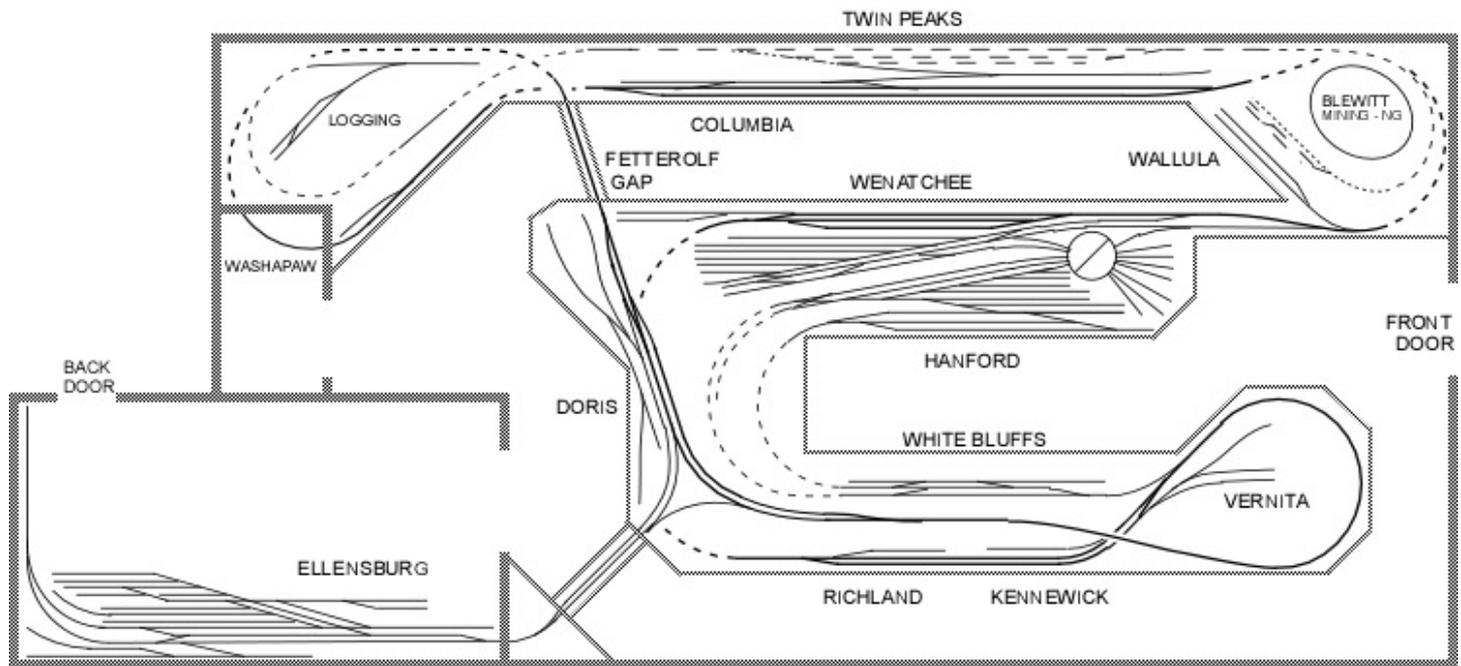




HC&N

Layout Design, 1996

TRI-CITY MODEL RAILROADERS HANFORD, COLUMBIA & NORTHERN



KEY

- Mainline
- - Hidden Track
- Sidings and Yards
- - Narrow Gauge
- - Dual Gauge

1996 Decker



HC&N

The renovated club house, 1977

Notice the shiny
clean floor





HC&N

Early construction, no scenery yet





HC&N

Gary Raabe at
Fetterolf's Gap



Wenatchee Yard has
a little scenery



HC&N

Carl Sonner watches as train enters a rather barren Dorris





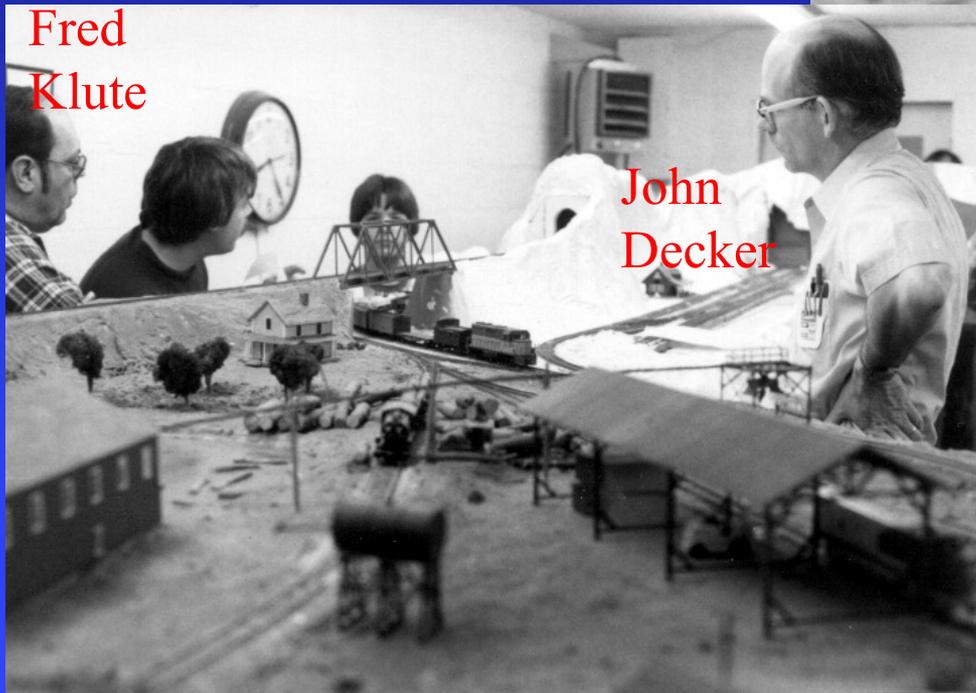
HC&N

The sawmill at Pasco
City (now Vernita)



Fred
Klute

John
Decker

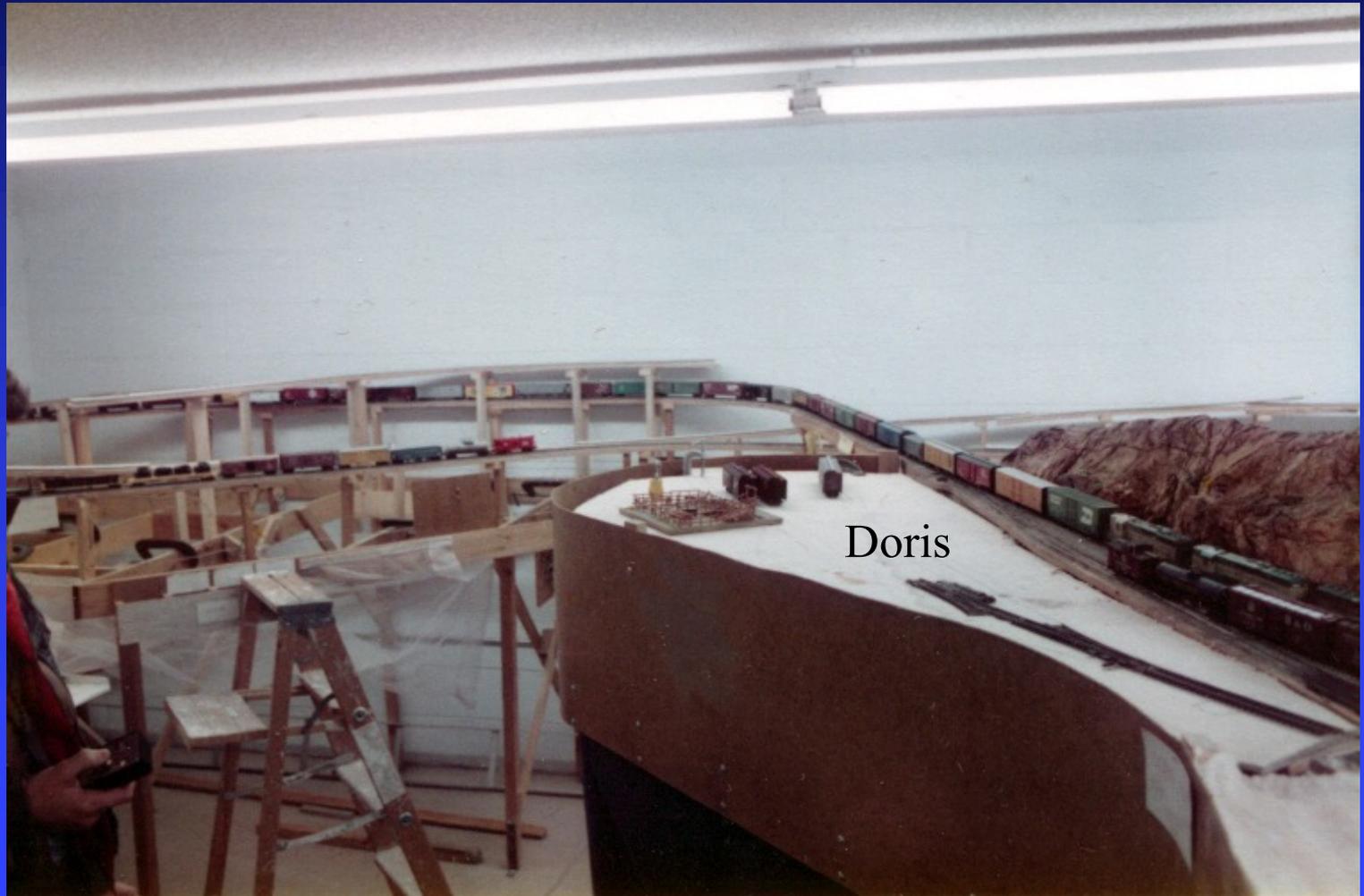


“On Bulging Pond”, by
John Billahorka



HC&N

Long train over Fetterolf's Gap, through Wash-A-Paw and into Doris





HC&N



Vernita Siding
(notice card box)

Pasco City
(now Vernita)



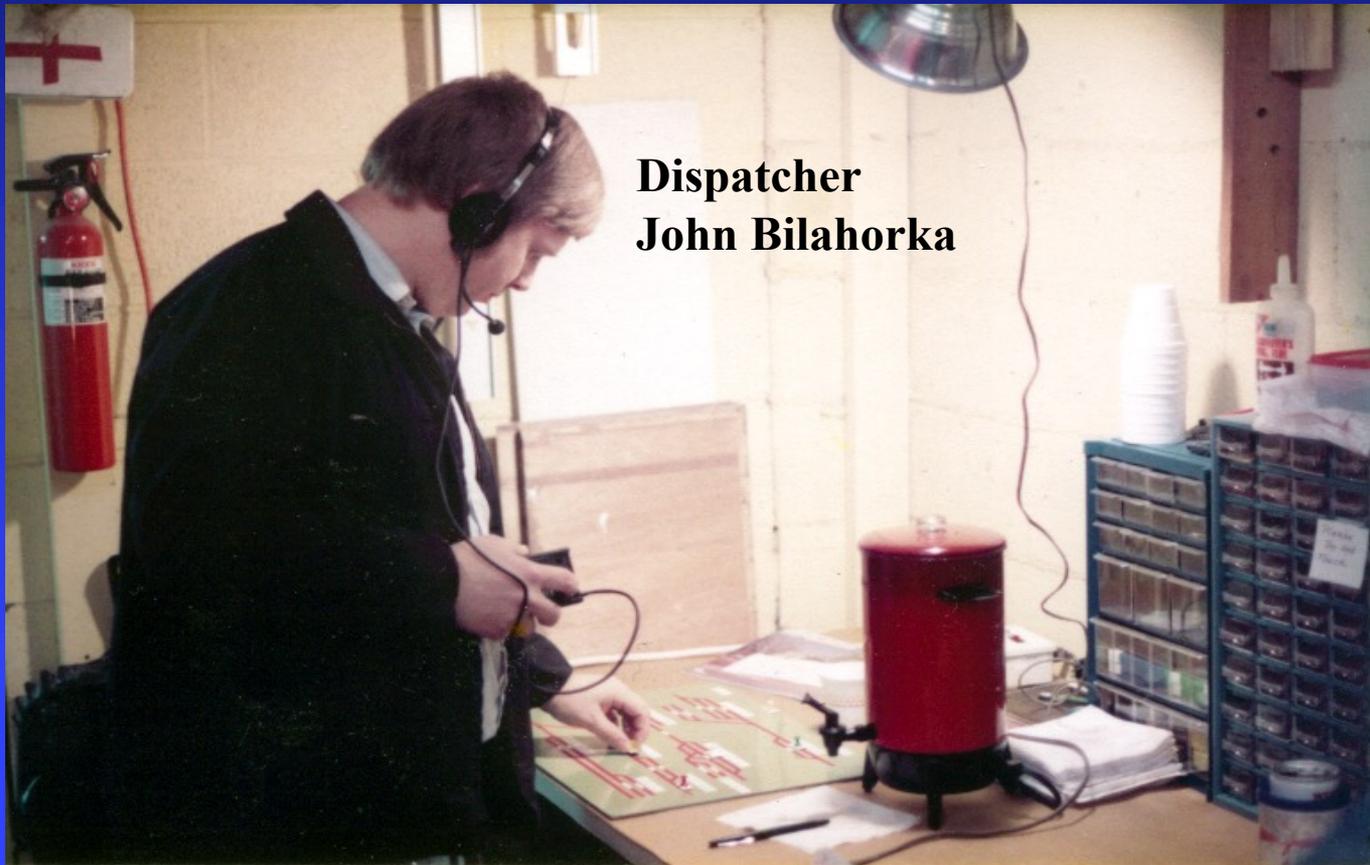


HC&N

First HC&N operating session was June 19, 1981.

Bilahorka dispatching “blind” from the back room.

Guess it is not that exciting judging from the size of the coffee pot.



Planting the Semaphore 1982



Building the base for the semaphore, April 1982

Jekel, Hammond,
Bilahorka, ??, ??, Newsom





Semaphore

Ed Keenan completes the wiring



Open House

HC&N



Open House

First HC&N Open House was November, 1981
Wenatchee Yard





Open House

Newsom fields questions



Tight squeeze

Jim

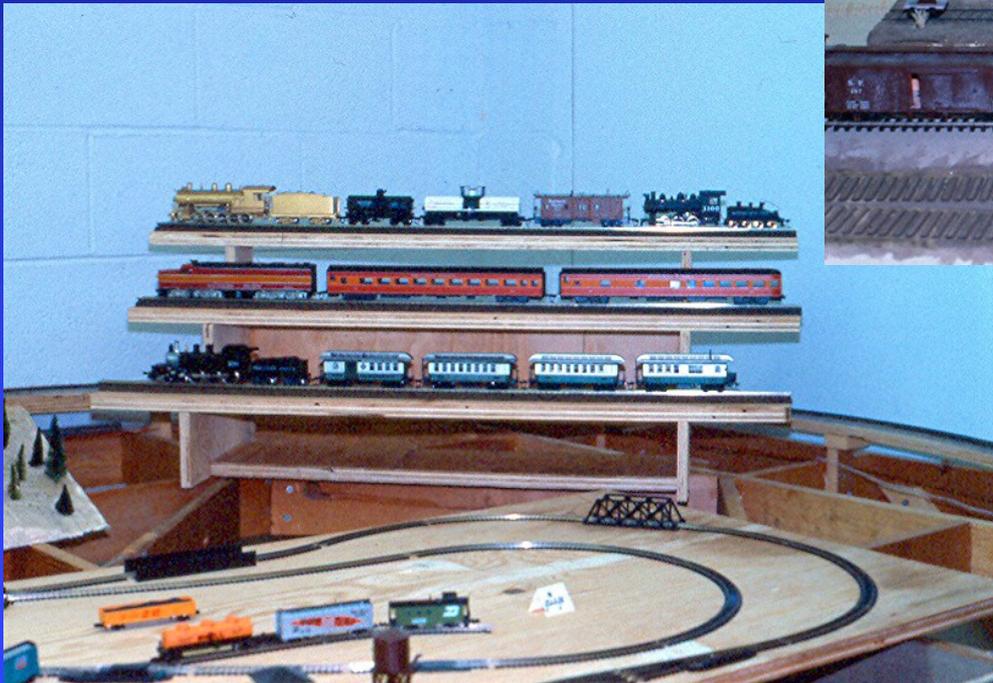
Newsom



Open House

During early years, we made up for the lack of scenery with displays

N-scale layout
and train displays

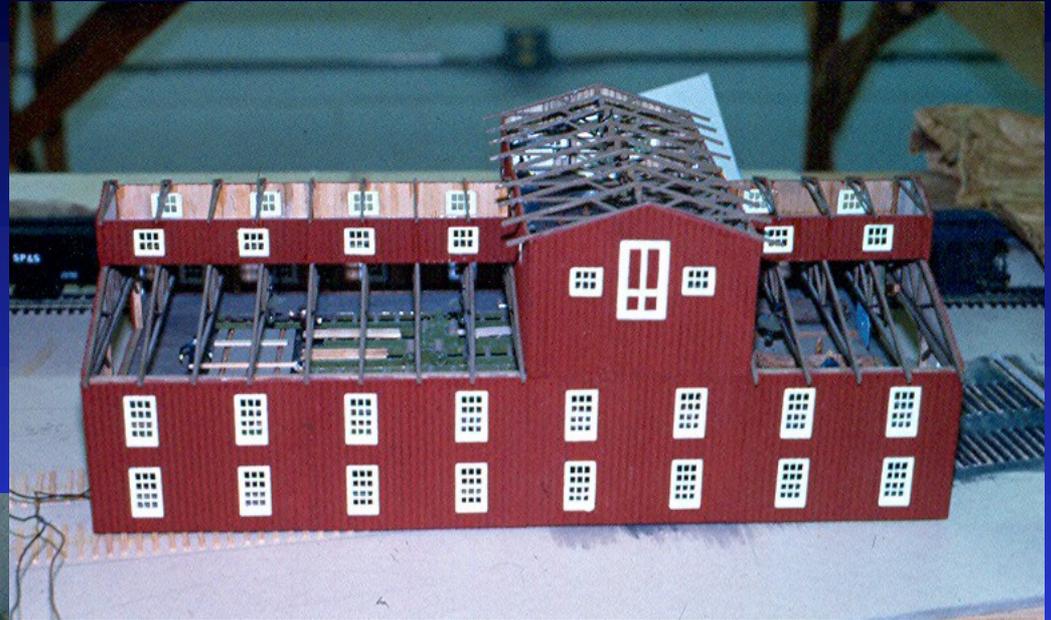


Jekel's gravel bunker



Open House

Display of scales. Note unfinished roundhouse and cola can (water tank) display in background



Newsom's Sawmill

First Modules

1981 - 1990



First Modules

Display at Columbia Center. Bilahorka and Newsom attempt to keep the trains running while Jekel looks on and Decker prays





First Modules

Mini-meet at Pasco PUD





First Modules

Mini-meet at Pasco PUD





First Modules

Gary and Nancy Fetterolf set up at Howard Amon Park for the Rockwell picnic, August 1983





First Modules

Rockwell Picnic at Howard Amon Park





First Modules

Bilahorka and Hammond at Dayton Depot Days. Modules displayed at Dayton in 1984 in 105°, windy, gravel lot with no shade.





First Modules

John Bilahorka adjusts the speed of his Ferris wheel





First Modules

Details of John Bilahorka's module





First Modules

Details of Modules



????

Hammond



Second Modules

1990 - 2021



Second Modules 1990 - 2021

Construction at old Spalding School, Richland, Spring 1990

First modules were too long and heavy to easily transport





Second Modules

Larry Hubschman clamps the spline sub-roadbed





Second Modules

John Decker carving foam sub-scenery





Second Modules

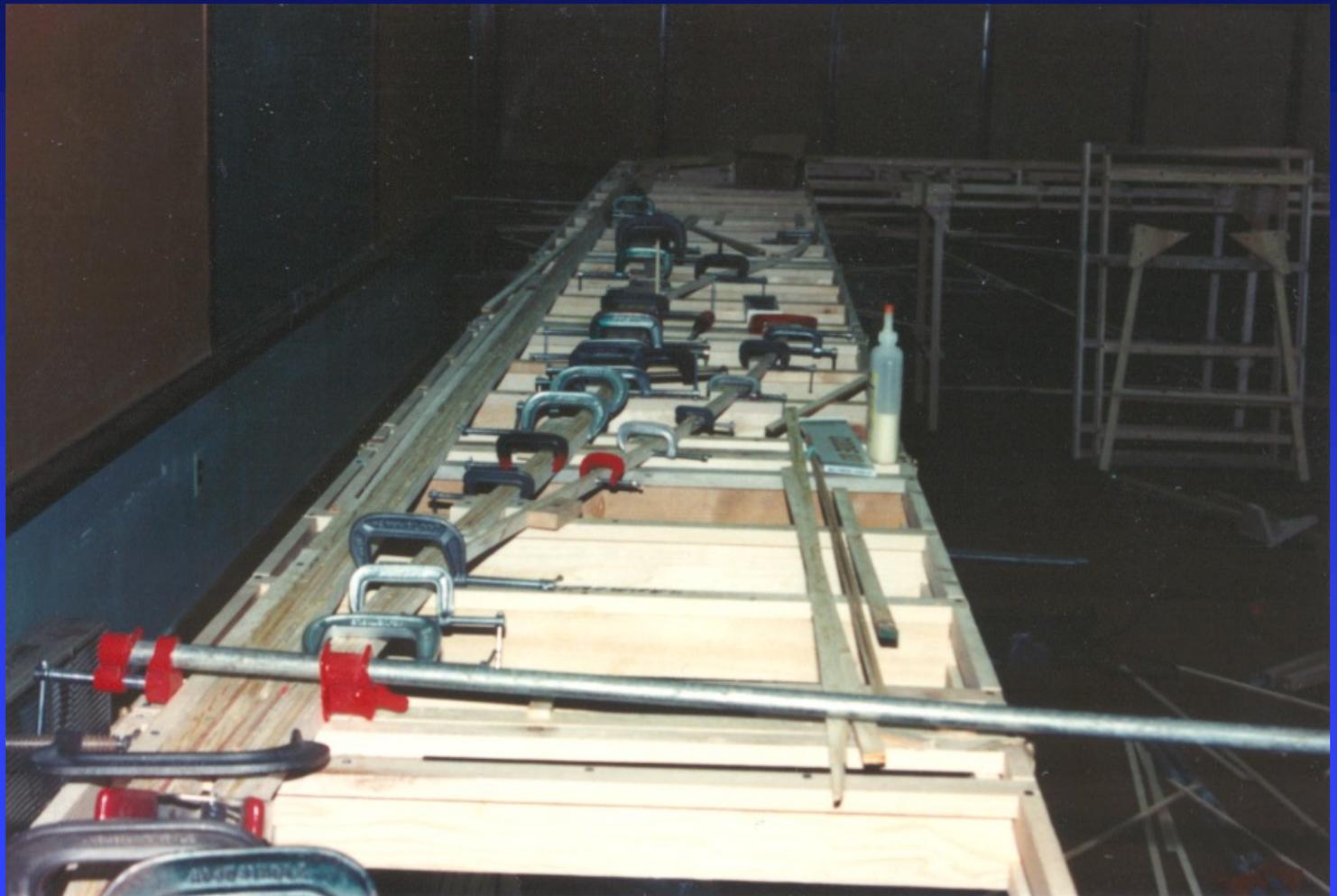
Gary Hammond, John Bilahorka, Bob Jekel, Fred Klute





Second Modules

Never enough clamps!





Second Modules

Modules first displayed at Benton-Franklin County Fair, 1991.

John Bilahorka, John DeSteele, Bob Jekel





Second Modules

Diversity show at TRAC, Pasco.

Carol Jekel, Gary Hammond, Rose Hubschman





Second Modules

Lind Centennial Celebration





Second Modules

Dayton Depot Days





Second Modules

Warm sun, slow day at Dayton





Second Modules

John Decker aligns rail joiners while Gary Hammond levels the tables at Toppenish



John

Gary



Second Modules

John DeSteele, Gary Hammond, John Bilahorka, and Dan Leary complete setting up at Toppenish





Second Modules

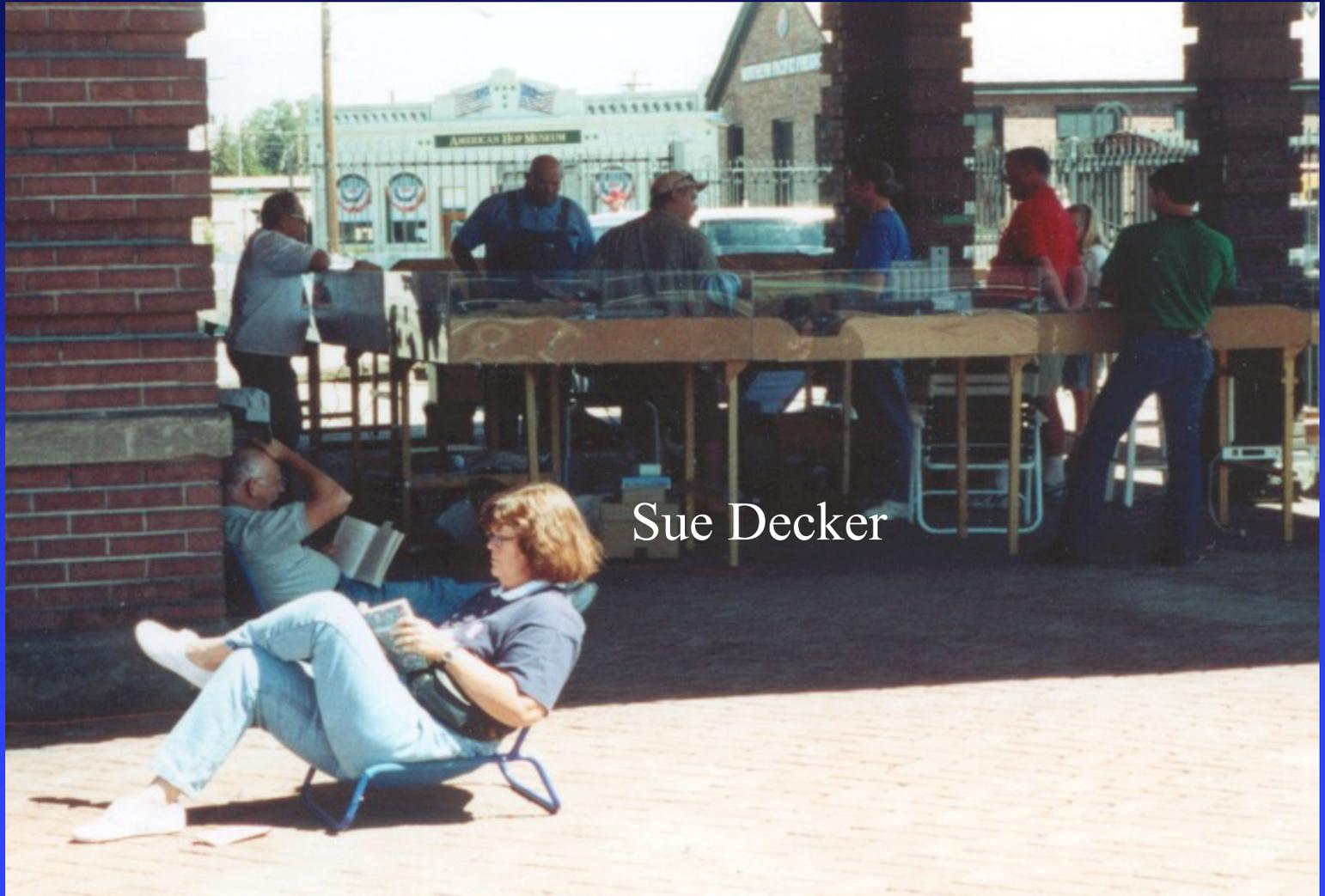
Rose Hubschman relaxes at Toppenish Western Days





Second Modules

Railroad's running. Time to relax (Toppenish 2001)



Sue Decker

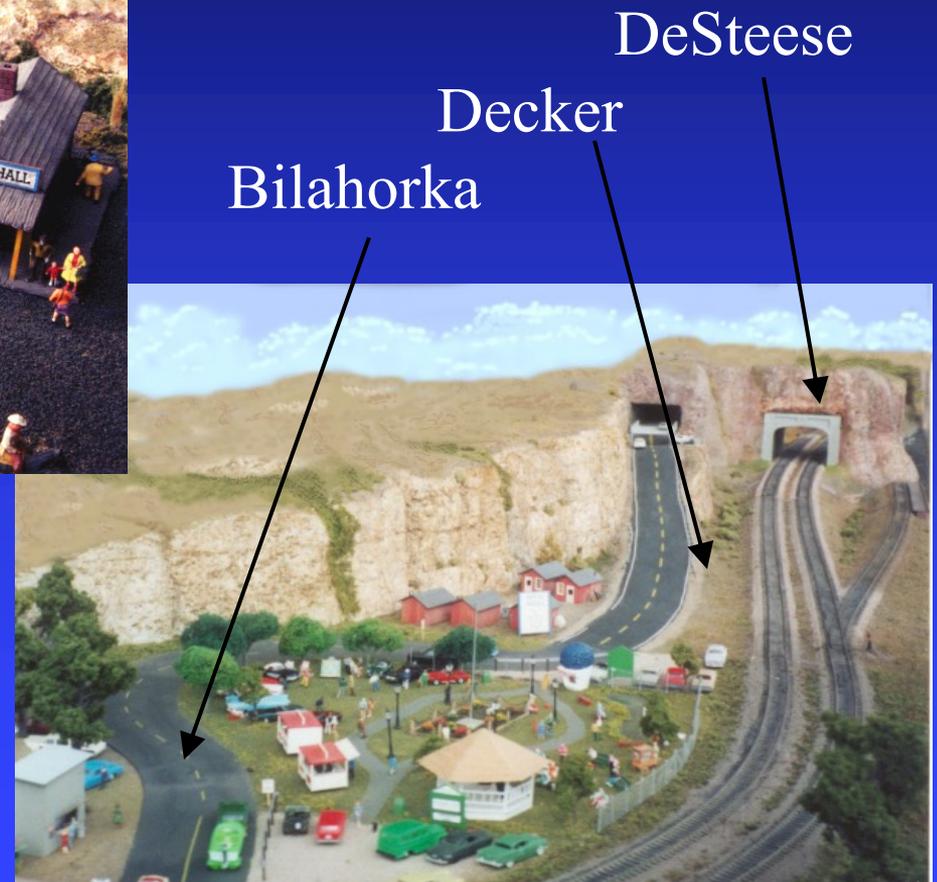


Second Modules

Details of Modules



Rice



DeSteese

Decker

Bilahorka



Second Modules

Details of Modules

Newsom



Bilahorka

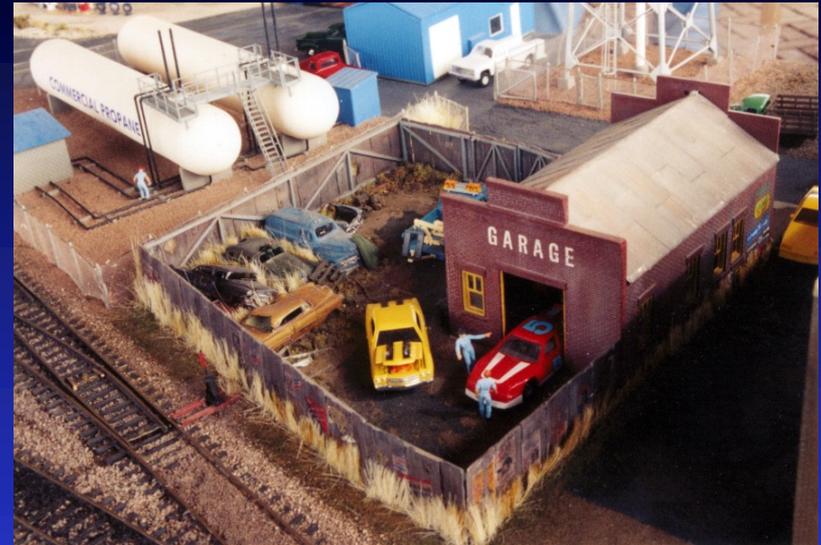


Second Modules

Details of Modules



Bilahorka



Jekel



Jekel



Second Modules

Details of Modules

Hubschman



Decker



Social Activities



Club Picnic

Members congregate at the Decker's for the first club picnic (1971)





Club Picnic

Heike DeSteesse and
Marian Taylor



Gail Miller





Dayton Depot Days

The Depot at Dayton





Dayton Depot Days

Entertainment on the depot plaza



Parachute provides some protection from the sun





Dayton Depot Days

Campout at Lewis and Clark campground following the show at Dayton





Dayton Depot Days

Doc Moore gets the fire going at the Lewis and Clark campground



choo
choo



Club Excursions



Club Excursions

Daylight Dinner Train, Steam Fest '89



John & Deb
Burke



Bob & Carol
Jekel



Club Excursions

Washington Central Dinner Train

Boarding the train





Club Excursions

Yakima Valley Transit





Club Excursions

Yakima Valley Transit





Club Excursions

Gene Miller at
Bohemian Mines, OR



Gene serves up
the beer



Club Excursions

Dinner at Sumpter Valley Railroad





Club Excursions

Great Escape '88. One of our first stops.

Bilahorka hopes for a train at Dunsmuir, CA





Club Excursions

Chasing trains can be very tiring (Jim Taylor)





Club Excursions

Great Escape '88. The four escapees: Phil Miller, Bob Jekel, John Decker, John Bilahorka

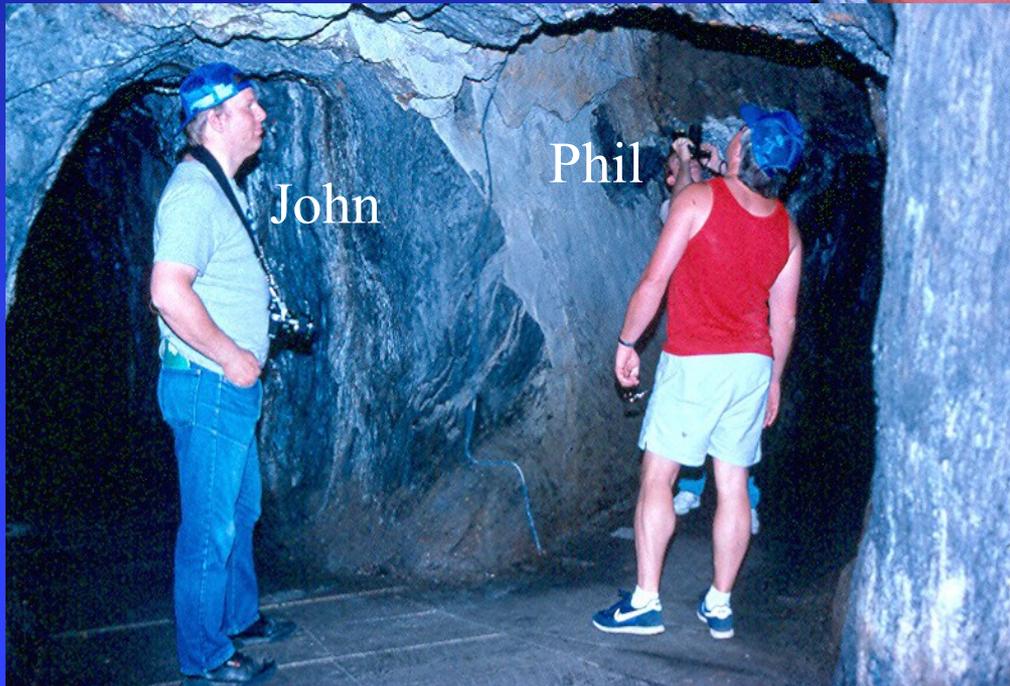




Club Excursions

Great Escape '88.

There's got to be some more gold here! Hangtown, CA



The “escapees” meet Ed Barnhart (Wenatchee) for a tour (and a beer - or two) in Virginia City



Club Excursions

Great Escape '88. Keddie Wye on the Western Pacific





Club Excursions

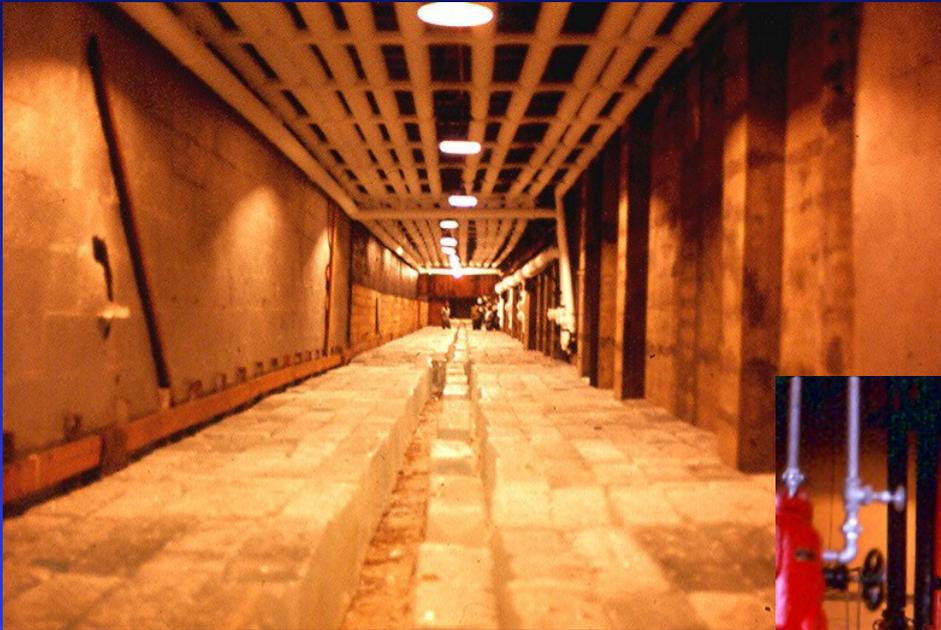
Tour of the NP Pasco ice house. Early 70's





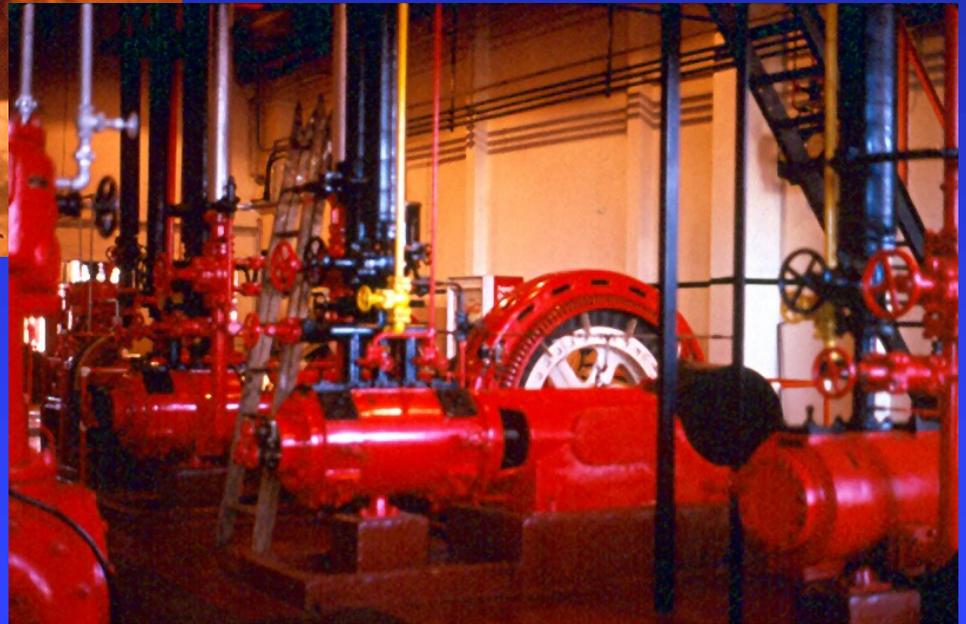
Club Excursions

Pasco NP ice house



Ice blocks lined up in the freezer for distribution into refrigerator cars

Refrigeration compressors





Club Excursions

Refers awaiting re-icing





Club Excursions

Dutch Boyson's front yard live steam in Yakima





Club Excursions

We pile on for a ride while Dutch drives the train



Notice the exuberant railfan taping sound

Train Chasing



Train Chasing

Bob Jekel and Gary Raabe check out UP 8444





Train Chasing

You can get a better view from the top of the
DeckerMobile





Train Chasing

John DeSteele and Jim Taylor well positioned in the back of Doc Moore's infamous station wagon





Train Chasing

If you're going to ride in Doc's station wagon, best be tied in. Rasmussen and Lucas





Train Chasing

There's got to be something neat in this pile of junk.
Decker and Moore in the Blue Mountains.





Train Chasing

John DeSteele lines up for a good shot (Blue Mountains



Community Service



Community Service

Lionel and American Flier Christmas display
at Pasco library





Community Service

Railroad display at Pasco Public Library



Bob Moore Departs to San Diego



Doc Departs

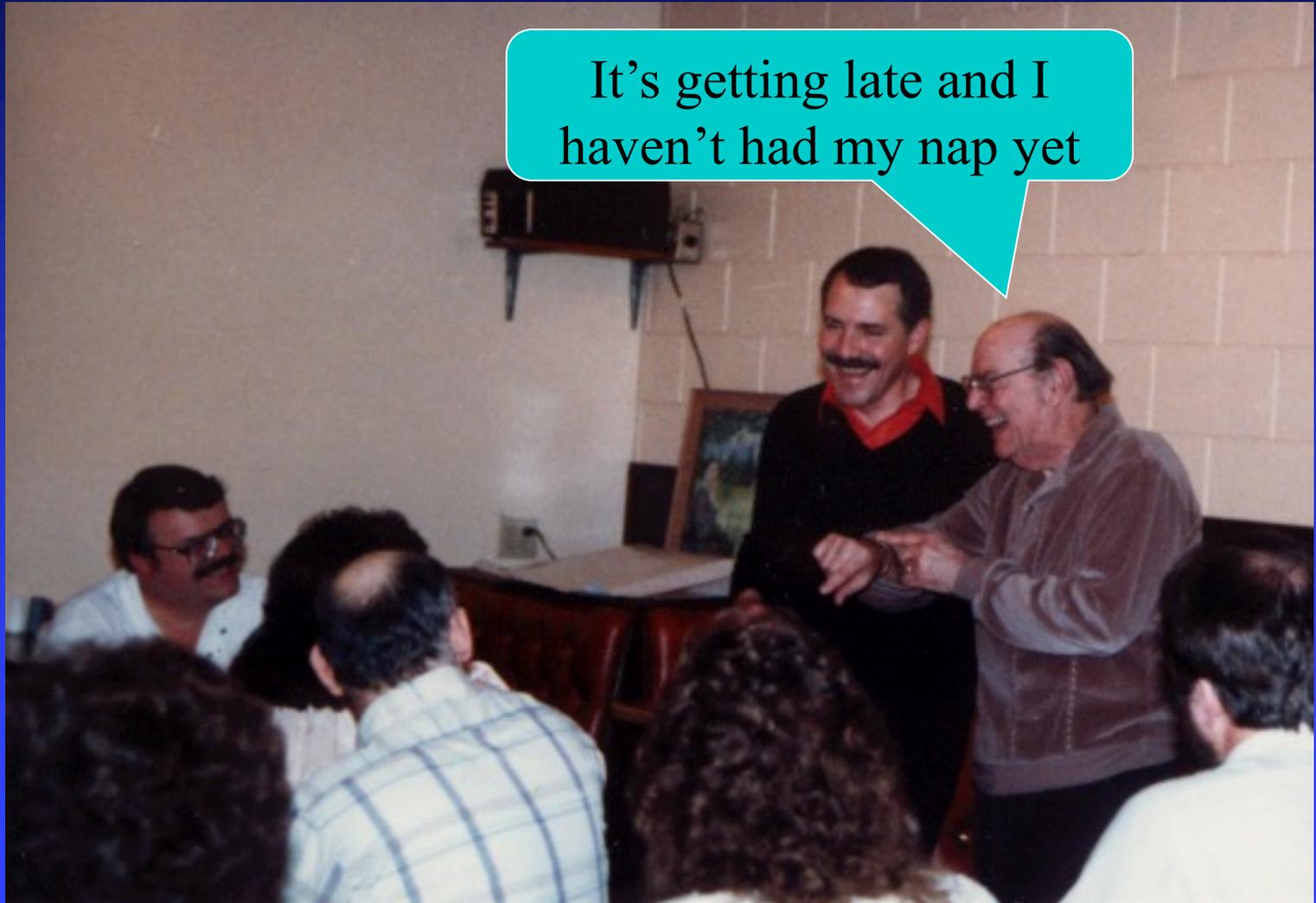
We can always think of an excuse for another party





Doc Departs

Dinner at Roy's Chuckwagon





Doc Departs

Back to Decker's for videos. Looks like everyone ate too much.





Doc Departs

If I concentrate, I can stay awake a little longer



TCMR's Involvement in the National Model Railroad Association



First Club Sponsored 5th Div. Mini-Meet, 1971

Lee Tillotson's Jerkwater Southern log train at Ohler's





First Club Mini-Meet

Relaxing over a beer after the meet. John Decker, Dave Martin, Gerry Ohler, George Goulet, Larry Ward, Gene Miller





Mini-Meet

Brad Ohler
participates in the
switching contest
on the portable
layout at Smitty's
(Yes, he won)





Mini-Meet

Entries in the Down-Hill Box Car Race





Mini-Meet



Display at Smitty's

Gary Beith races his
Shay (slowest wins)



Mini-Meet at Pasco PUD



Gerry Johnson's clinic
on rolling stock

TCMR's first
modules





Mini-Meet at old Spalding School

Jim Houston looks
over the contest
models



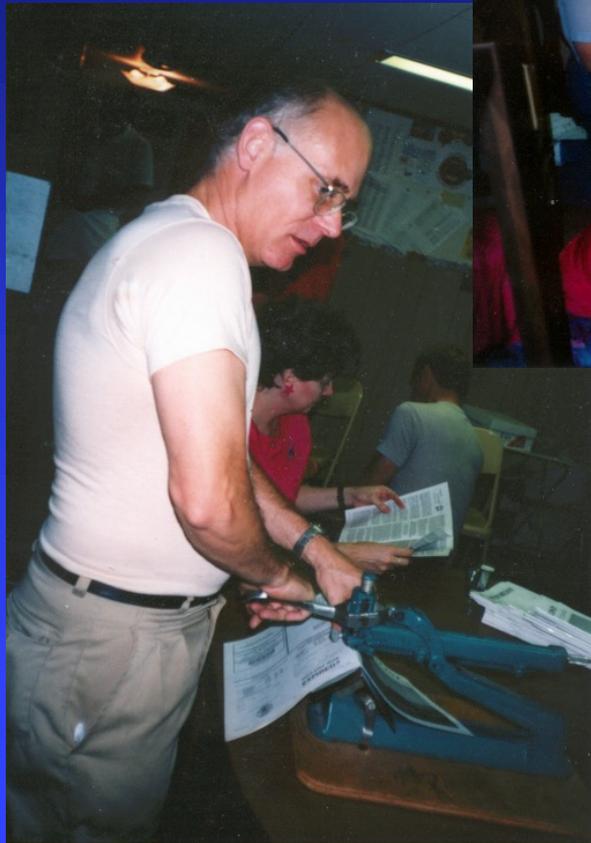
Clinic on scenery by
Spokane club member





TCMR & the NMRA

Assembling the PNR Switchlist





DESERT RAILS
TRI-CITIES WA

PRR

64



Desert Rails '84

Annual Convention of the Pacific Northwest Region of the
NMRA, Red Lion Inn, Pasco





Desert Rails '84

Gerry Fetterolf at the registration desk





Desert Rails '84

Happy Hour



Doc, Jim, Marian,
Sue, Joan, Gary



TRI-CITIES, WA



Desert Rails '98





Desert Rails '98

Convention Banquet



Connie Rudder, NMRA Executive Director
Wil Seaver, PNR President
John Decker, Convention Chair
Bob Charles, NMRA President



Crehst Museum Layout

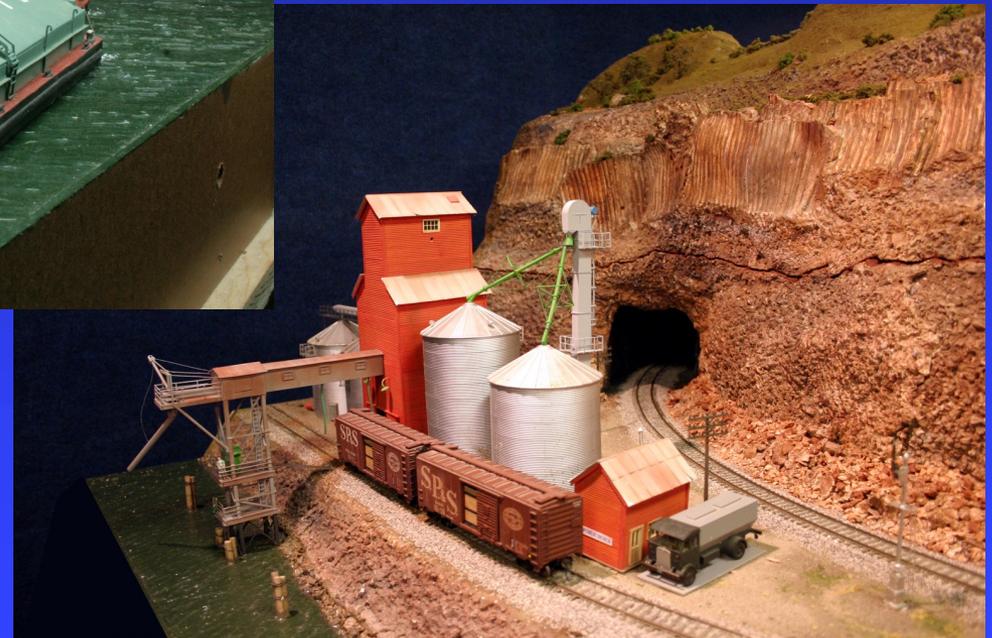
Layout build for display at Crehst Museum, Richland WA





Crehst Museum Layout

Columbia River Exhibit of History Science & Technology





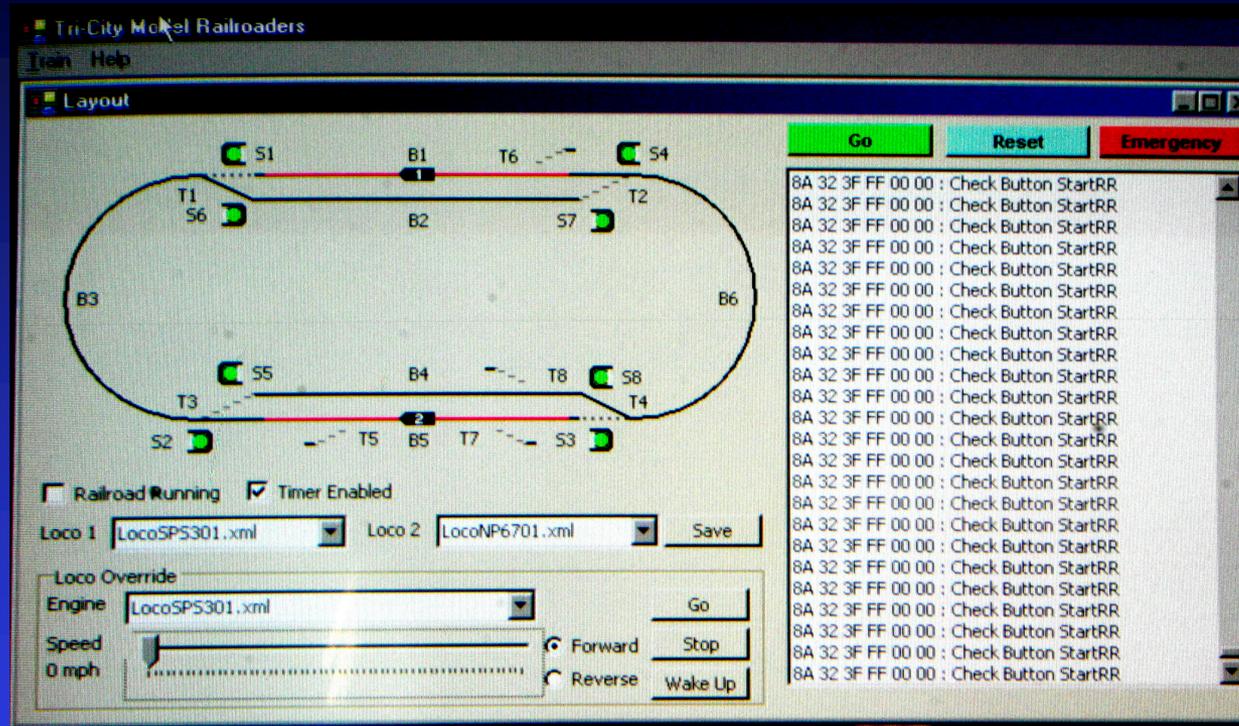
Crehst Museum Layout

Columbia River Gorge





Crehst Museum Layout



FULL COMPUTER AUTIOMATION

Push button to start

Two trains run with sound

Automatic semaphore signal system & grade crossing signal

Building lighting cycle



Crehst Museum Layout





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

Grange Layout

Kennewick valley Grange #731

Nov 2009 – Jan 2012





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

Grange Layout

Yakama Yard looking southwest, (Level 2)

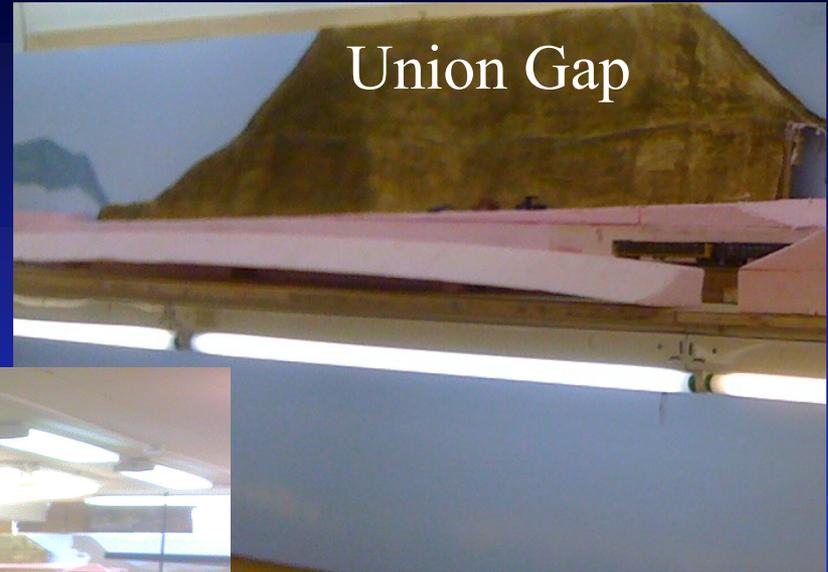




MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

Grange Layout

Looking South



Union Gap



Start of Helix to
lower deck (there
were two of these)



MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

Grange Layout

Toppenish





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout 2016 - Present



11W Kennewick WA, TCMR Layout & Gift Shop



MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout



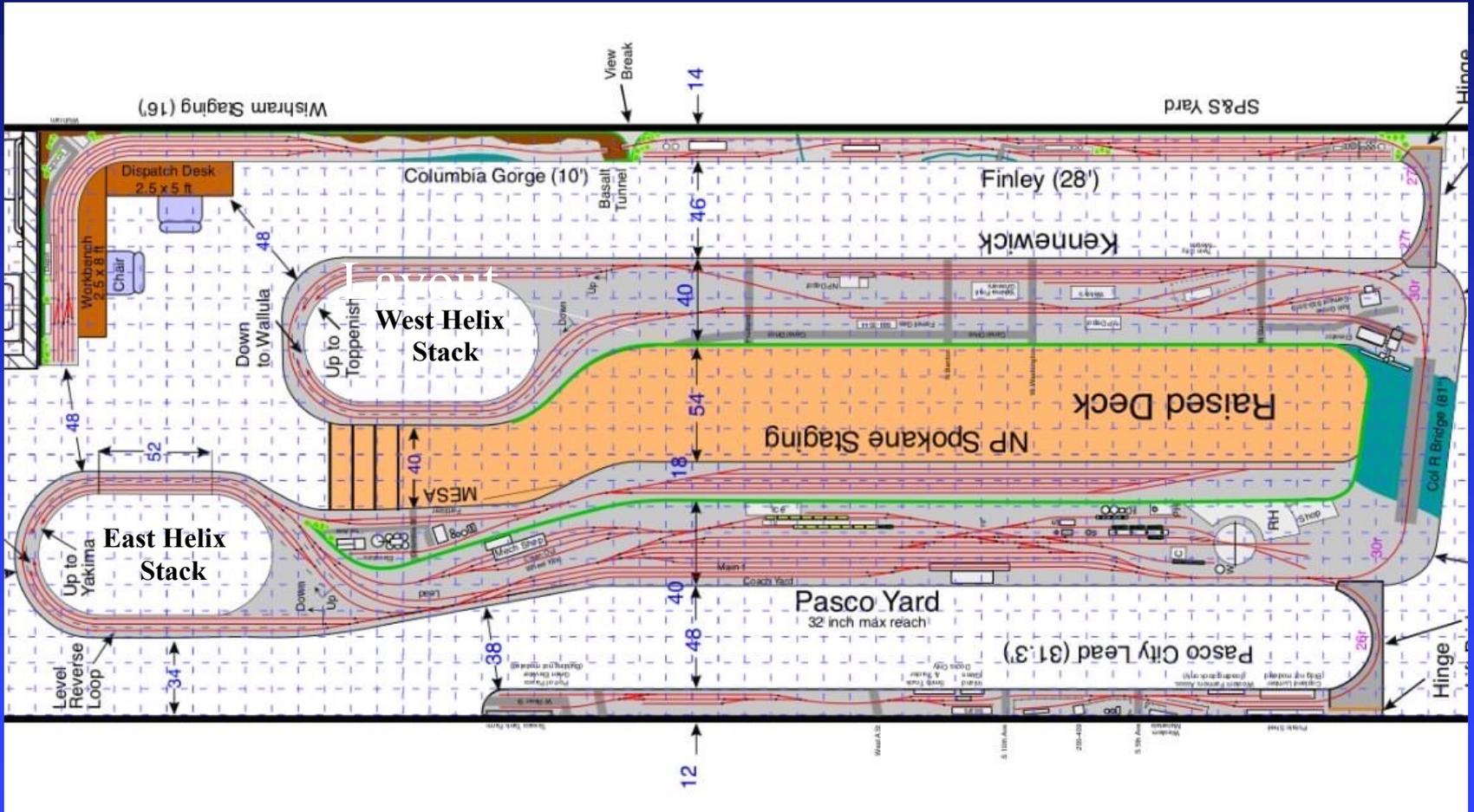
Mural on East Wall of 11W



MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout

Track Schematic - Level 2 (of 4)
Spokane Staging, Pasco, Kennewick, Finley,
Columbia Gorge, Wishram





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout

Metal Scaffold, complements of CBC
Welding Class





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout

Helix on the build.

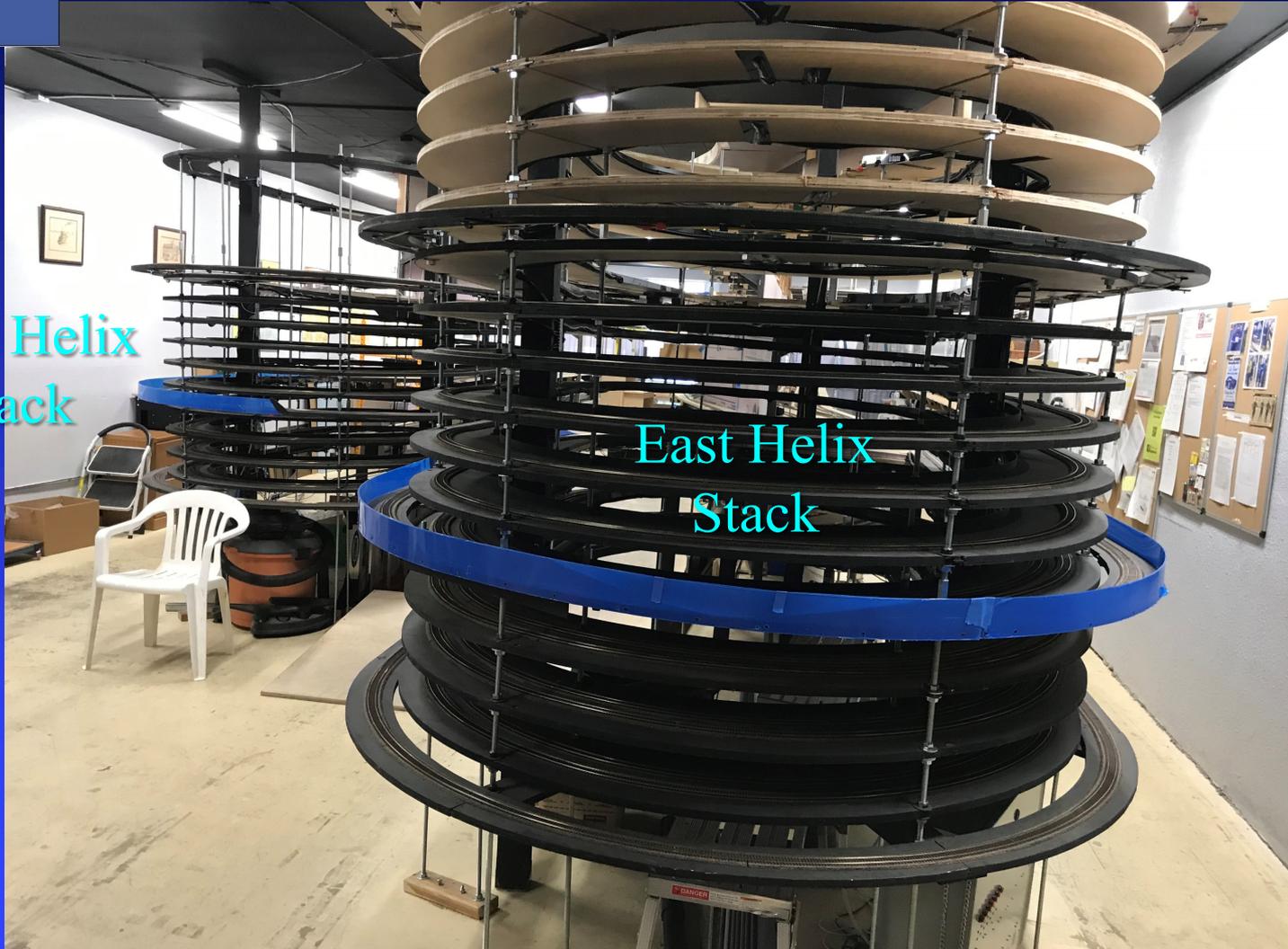




MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout

Seven helices in stacks of 4 and 3



West Helix
Stack

East Helix
Stack



MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout

Center Platform and Helix Stacks





11W Layout (East Wall)

Pasco Yard and Lead





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout

Front Entrance / Gift Shop





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout

Columbia River Lift Bridge





11W Layout

Gift Shop





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

11W Layout

Structures (John Bilahorka)

Pasco Roundhouse



Yakama NP Depot





MID-COLUMBIA
DIVISION

50 YEARS OF FUN